

CULTURES IN CONTACT

Scandinavian Settlement in England
in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

STUDIES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

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VOLUME 2

CULTURES IN CONTACT
Scandinavian Settlement in England
in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

Edited by

Dawn M. Hadley
&
Julian D. Richards



BREPOLS

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Cultures in contact : Scandinavian settlement in England in the ninth and tenth centuries. – (Studies in the early middle ages ; vol. 2)

1. Vikings – England 2. Civilization, Viking 3. England – Civilization

I. Hadley, D. M. (Dawn M.), 1967- II. Richards, J. D. (Julian D.)

942'.01

ISBN 2503509789

© 2000, Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium

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D/2000/0095/123

ISBN: 2-503-50978-9

Transferred to Digital Printing in 2009

Contents

Illustrations	vii
---------------	-----

Part 1. Problems and Perspectives

Introduction: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Scandinavian Settlement DAWN M. HADLEY & JULIAN D. RICHARDS	3
Ethnicity, Migration Theory, and the Historiography of the Scandinavian Settlement of England SIMON TRAFFORD	17

Part 2. Lordship, Language, and Identity

The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking Age England PAUL KERSHAW	43
Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Political Allegiance MATTHEW INNES	65
Viking Age England as a Bilingual Society MATTHEW TOWNEND	89
‘Hamlet and the Princes of Denmark’: Lordship in the Danelaw, c. 860–954 DAWN M. HADLEY	107

Part 3. The Scandinavian Settlement and the Church

Conversion and Assimilation	135
LESLEY ABRAMS	

Survival and Mutation: Ecclesiastical Institutions in the Danelaw in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries	155
JULIA BARROW	

Part 4. Material Culture and Identity

Monuments and Merchants: Irregularities in the Distribution of Stone Sculpture in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire in the Tenth Century	179
DAVID STOCKER	

Viking Age Stone Monuments and Social Identity in Derbyshire	213
PHIL SIDEBOTTOM	

Anglo-Scandinavian Metalwork from the Danelaw: Exploring Social and Cultural Interaction	237
GABOR THOMAS	

Part 5. Settlement Archaeology and the Scandinavian Settlement

The Viking Presence in England? The Burial Evidence Reconsidered	259
GUY HALSALL	

All in the Genes? Evaluating the Biological Evidence of Contact and Migration	277
MARTIN PAUL EVISON	

Identifying Anglo-Scandinavian Settlements	295
JULIAN D. RICHARDS	

Anglo-Scandinavian Attitudes: Archaeological Ambiguities in Late Ninth- to Mid-Eleventh-Century York	311
R.A. HALL	

Index	325
-------	-----

Illustrations

1. Distribution of Scandinavian place-names in England
2. Reconstruction of cross-shaft from Leeds (Yorks)
3. Cross-shaft from Kirklevington (Yorks)
4. Edmund penny from East Anglia
5. Map of eastern Danelaw to show locations of sites mentioned in the text
6. List of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Lincolnshire: table
7. Radar chart demonstrating sites with 'exceptional' numbers of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Lincolnshire
8. Map showing distribution of sites with Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture in Lincoln
9. Maps to show topographical settings of sites with 'exceptional' numbers of monumental sculptures in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire
10. List of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Yorkshire
11. Radar chart demonstrating sites with 'exceptional' numbers of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Yorkshire
12. Map showing distribution of sites with Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in York
13. Approximate boundaries of territories referred to in Tribal Hidage
14. The distribution of groupings of sculpture based on design elements
15. Distribution of regional groups of monuments and approximate areas of diocesan boundaries
16. Distribution of regional groups of monuments and approximate secular land divisions
17. Distribution of 'prime' group of monuments
18. A selection of Borre-style and multi-headed strap-ends from Britain
19. Distribution of Borre-style strap-ends in Britain

20. Distribution of multi-headed strap-ends in Britain
21. A selection of double-sided and ribbed strap-ends with examples of related buckles
22. Distribution of double-sided strap-ends in Britain
23. Distribution of ribbed strap-ends in Britain
24. The traditional map of 'Viking' burials
25. The races of Britain
26. Genetic boundaries in Britain
27. Pictish vs Scandinavian building characteristics
28. Cottam, East Yorkshire. Anglo-Scandinavian settlement as revealed in magnetometer plot
29. Cottam, East Yorkshire. Two Anglo-Scandinavian bells decorated with ring-and-dot ornament

Part 1. Problems and Perspectives

Introduction: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Scandinavian Settlement

DAWN M. HADLEY & JULIAN D. RICHARDS

This volume examines the Scandinavian impact on England in the ninth and tenth centuries, with particular reference to Scandinavian settlement, and the diverse ways in which the Scandinavians and the native populations responded to each other. Many previous studies have described the settlement as involving a rapid assimilation of the settlers with native society and culture, and a swift process of integration. This volume re-examines that view and shows that the processes of accommodation, assimilation, and integration were gradual and complex, displaying important regional variations. Accordingly, we suggest that we need to ask and address the following questions: What type of society did the Scandinavians come from? What type of society did they eventually settle into? What were the implications of setting cultures in contact, and how is this reflected in the surviving material, documentary, and linguistic evidence? An important aim of this volume is to open up new interdisciplinary dialogue in Viking Studies, and the following chapters analyse documentary, archaeological, artefactual, and linguistic evidence to assess just how far each of these forms of evidence can be used to examine issues of cultural identity and assimilation.

The volume also seeks to develop more theoretically sophisticated accounts of Scandinavian settlement, and to bring the study of this subject up-to-date in terms of developments in other branches of history, archaeology, and linguistics. Recent discussion concerning material culture and language has shown that they do not simply reflect changes in society and culture but are also active, constituent elements in creating and re-creating social and cultural identities (Shennan 1989; Jones and Graves-Brown 1995; Jones 1997; Hines 1991; 1995). The volume takes a more rigorously contextual approach than has hitherto been the case in the study of Scandinavian

settlement, and seeks to throw new light on the consequences of cultures in contact. A number of the chapters demonstrate that assimilation was a complex process, with the resultant culture reflecting neither one nor the other of the original parts, or even an amalgam of the ingredients, but assuming instead a new independent identity. The volume also emphasises the creation and re-creation of local and regional identities and affinities, and moves on from the traditional depiction of the issues in terms of a simple dichotomy of 'Scandinavian' and 'English'. Furthermore, it is clear that each type of available evidence does not necessarily tell the same story. What are the reasons for these differences? Are they methodological, reflecting how terms such as 'Scandinavian' are differently defined and used by scholars, or do they reflect real differences in the ways in which peoples construct their identities in some aspects of their cultures, but not in others? Is there a need to define new terms, such as Anglo-Scandinavian, which can be used in an interdisciplinary fashion?

A number of papers written in the 1980s and 1990s provided overviews of the debates about Scandinavian settlement in England (e.g. Wormald 1982; Morris 1984; Graham-Campbell 1986; Hall 1994; Hadley 1997; Keynes 1997), and although the conclusions reached in those papers vary, they make apparent that the subject of Scandinavian settlement has been placed within a clear set of parameters, resulting in a fixation with a series of what are deemed to be fundamental questions. How many Vikings were there? Where did they settle? Why is there so little evidence for 'pagan' activity? Does the linguistic and place-name evidence really indicate mass settlement? How Danish was the Danelaw? What were the relative levels of continuity and change? Yet so often commentators observe that 'we are not yet able to answer' most of these questions, and offer the hope that archaeology will eventually be able to resolve some of these old debates through the retrieval of new data, or the application of new techniques, such as DNA analysis. This volume maintains that new data is unlikely to help. Framed within out-dated historical frameworks, which do not make the best use of the available evidence, these questions are, in many cases, misconceived or fundamentally unanswerable. This volume seeks to pose, and answer, more appropriate questions of the material, with an emphasis on the possibilities and limitations of different types of evidence.

The volume rejects the old notion that there is a readily predictable and direct correlation between such factors as the scale of the Scandinavian settlement, its impact, the development and expression of 'ethnic' and cultural identities, the relative levels of continuity, and the characteristic features of the regions of England settled by the Scandinavians. Rather, it suggests that the available evidence has more to reveal about the diversity of the Scandinavian impact on England, and the diversity of the native responses. It demonstrates that there is a need to take account of regional variation and to be aware of changes through time. There is also a need to address the question of what people thought of themselves and their 'ethnic' allegiances, if, indeed, they ever or normally thought in those terms. Above all, the evidence available to us does not simply reflect or record the process of Scandinavian assimilation, but it actively contributed to that process.

The History of the Scandinavian Settlements

Our introduction establishes the background to the volume and places it in its historiographical context. Simon Trafford discusses the historiography of the Scandinavian settlement, and compares it with the study of other migrations and settlements in the early medieval period. His analysis demonstrates that the accepted wisdom concerning the nature of Scandinavian settlement reflects as much about the relative weight given to different disciplines and particular categories of evidence as it does any fundamental characteristics of the period. Throughout the volume the contributors highlight the importance of recent studies of other periods and regions, and identify the implications of taking a new approach to the Scandinavian settlement. The intention is not to provide a new template for studying the impact of the Scandinavian settlement. As Trafford observes, the aim is not 'to imbue modern thinking [. . .] with panacea-like qualities to dot the i's and cross the t's of the Viking settlement question'. There are no easy answers, and no magic formula, but there is great potential to re-assess the familiar evidence by moving on from the debates that have characterized the subject for the last half-century.

Lordship and Authority

Traditionally there has been far greater attention paid to the scale of the Scandinavian settlement and to the actions of the masses than there has been to the leaders of the settlers. Studies by Alfred Smyth on Scandinavian rulers published in the 1970s were less influential on the field than they might have been because of his somewhat cavalier attitude to evidence (Smyth 1975; 1977; 1978; cf. Wormald 1982, 143). In a paper published in 1982, Patrick Wormald observed that this neglect of lordship was strange given that the students of other Germanic peoples had been obsessed with leaders and leadership. A more recent paper by Simon Keynes (1997) summarizing the Scandinavian impact on England had far more to say about lordship and political developments than is traditional of such summaries. Indeed, he leaves the issue of the scale of the settlement largely undiscussed. More attention to aspects of lordship in the societies of northern and eastern England following the Scandinavian settlement is clearly required, and this will help to elucidate not only how the leaders of the Scandinavian settlers sought to establish their authority but also how they interacted with indigenous rulers in a variety of social and political circumstances. Documentary sources may be explored to help understand the operation of lordship in the context of contact between settlers and indigenous rulers. For example, the Alfred-Guthrum Treaty of c. 886 has much to contribute to understanding contemporary perceptions of how accommodation between different social groups might be achieved, if its position within Alfred's political ideology is established. Accommodation was reached between Scandinavian rulers and indigenous rulers through peace-making processes and legal enactment, and the Alfred-Guthrum treaty may be compared in significance with other broadly contemporary examples of peace-making and techniques of accommodation, as Paul Kershaw's

chapter reveals. Clearly leaders such as Guthrum drew heavily on indigenous means of negotiation and established their rule on the model of indigenous forms of kingship. This is echoed in the use made by Scandinavian rulers of coinage modelled on Anglo-Saxon forms, and their adoption of stone sculpture and forms of indigenous iconography. It is clearly time to consider Scandinavian lordship not simply in terms of military activities but also in terms of the sophisticated administrative, legal, diplomatic, and ideological world of early medieval society.

Another feature of early medieval lordship that requires attention concerns the ways in which lords drew on, and constructed, ethnic identity and how it was understood and expressed in early medieval societies. This subject has received much attention in recent years, both from archaeologists and historians (e.g. Geary 1983; Amory 1993; 1994; Pohl and Reimitz 1998; Jones 1997). It is now widely accepted that ethnic identity is not innate, but is malleable and historically situated. These issues have, however, received very little attention from students of the Scandinavian settlements. In a paper about English identity, Susan Reynolds (1985) made a few pertinent observations about the Scandinavian settlements, noting that the evidence for the long-term division of society in northern and eastern England into 'Danes' and 'English', and for continuing feelings of 'Danishness' among the settlers, is far less substantive than has often been supposed. The ways in which Danish identity was constructed in northern England in the tenth and eleventh centuries is not simply an issue that hinges on the scale of the settlement, because ethnic identity is not simply a given passively inherited or reducible to biological descent, but rather ethnic identities are 'social constructions, transmitted and transmuted over time and space' (Innes, this volume). One important factor in the construction of Danish identity in England was the continuing importance of northern factionalism within the English kingdom. This factionalism was often labelled in contemporary documents by reference to the Danish heritage of the region. However, it appears to have been more common for local elites to define their allegiances in terms of the administrative units through which they related to the king, when regional voices gave vent to regional grievances (Stafford 1978). 'Danishness' only entered the political field in exceptional circumstances. We should remember that ethnic identities may be forged and made explicit in specific circumstances, and that they may also coincide with many other social, political, and regional identities. Moreover, the volume as a whole is a reminder that ethnic identities may be constructed and articulated in many different ways, and that the documents, which have long formed the focus for discussion of the 'Danishness' of the inhabitants of northern and eastern England, have less to reveal about the ethnic identities of the majority of those inhabitants than they do about political developments and perceptions.

The ways in which lords exercised authority in northern England between the later ninth century and the later tenth century required lords, of whatever origins, to draw on a repertoire of pre-existing Scandinavian and native motifs of lordship in order to underpin their control. Central to this were the Church and the manipulation of material culture and language. Rather than involving simple 'continuity', lords manipulated images of authority to create new forms of social and ethnic identity, which were central

to the creation of an Anglo-Scandinavian aristocracy. The contribution of a study of the linguistic relations between speakers of Old Norse and Old English to our understanding of Scandinavian settlement still holds much promise, and the lexical transfer from Norse to English may have much to reveal about contact between the two linguistic groups. The linguistic evidence reveals that far from there having been a simple borrowing of the lexicon, there was a distinct phase of language shift by Old Norse speakers. As Matthew Townend reminds us, languages do not simply change, they do so because speakers of languages come into contact with each other.

As Trafford suggests, the breakdown of communication between those working on the historical evidence—and, one might add, the archaeological evidence—and those working on linguistic evidence for Scandinavian settlement is a serious problem for students of Viking Age England and one which must be overcome if work is to proceed. In order to progress it will be necessary for practitioners of each of the relevant disciplines to cease from writing as if their evidence contained the trump card which negates the evidence from the other fields. Increasing familiarity with the evidence, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks of other disciplines is essential. Historians and archaeologists have, as Cecily Clark pointed out in one of her last papers, been slow to acquaint themselves with even the rudiments of historical linguistics (Clark 1991, 22–3). One reason for this may be the perception in historical and archaeological fields that discussion of linguistic evidence is effectively limited to the place-names—at least to judge from their footnotes, as Trafford points out—a branch of linguistic scholarship that has continued to focus on etymology, dating, and the relationship of place-names to settlement chronologies. From what is admittedly an increasingly embattled position, place-name scholarship has arguably tended to overrule other forms of evidence, on such matters as the scale, the nature, and the impact of the Scandinavian settlement. For their part, linguists and place-name scholars have had to deal with their fair share of scepticism from ‘non-believers’ in other disciplines. However, historical linguistics is not, of course, limited to philology; yet historians and archaeologists seem to be unacquainted with the vast body of literature available in the field (Trafford, and Townend, this volume).

The replacement of debates about the scale of the Scandinavian settlement with discussion of issues of identity and cultural change ought to provide a more fruitful context for interdisciplinary discussions and even collaboration. In the past, there has been a much greater emphasis on the identification of loan-words and the extent of linguistic borrowing from Scandinavian into English than there has on the cultural context in which language change occurred. Yet any attempt to analyse loan-words without due regard to the social contexts within which words might have been borrowed is, arguably, the linguistic equivalent of an archaeologist trying to make sense of a mixed box of undated and unprovenanced artefacts, their only contextual evidence coming in the form of the date when they entered a museum catalogue. In any case, we are dealing with far greater linguistic complexities than the study of loan-words can possibly account for on its own (see, for example, Hansen 1984; Hines 1991; 1995). In two recent papers John Hines (1991; 1995) has also provided a useful approach to the

linguistic evidence, through the use of an archaeological parallel. He has described the production of 'Scandinavian English' as a deliberate act which was part of the processes of acculturation, which may also be traced through, for example, the fusion of indigenous and Scandinavian motifs on stone sculpture and coins (Hines, 1991, 417–18). He has also drawn a parallel between the manipulation of artefacts and of language by groups of people as 'acts of identity' (Hines 1995, 58). The manipulation of language, material culture, and identity is clearly a subject ripe for study in the societies of northern and eastern England, as a number of the contributions to the present volume demonstrate. If we are to make progress it is essential that future research recognizes the mutability of identity and its outward trappings, and that it moves beyond the long-standing tendency in the study of Scandinavian settlement to regard ethnic identity as fixed and innate (Hadley 1997, 82–93).

Churches and Churchmen

It is perhaps for violence against churches that the Scandinavians have been most seriously vilified. Our perception of the Scandinavian settlement has been coloured by ecclesiastical views from Alcuin onwards. Yet, whatever the damage done to the fortunes of the Church—which we should not forget may have been considerable (Wormald 1982, 137–41)—many churches survived, many others were eventually founded or re-founded, and many churchmen continued to play an important role in the politics and the culture of northern and eastern England. In a number of studies there has been an emphasis on continuity of ecclesiastical organization, or on its rapid re-establishment (Whitelock 1937–45; Rollason 1987a, 45–61; Hadley 1996; 1997). However, how and why that was possible has received little detailed attention. How, for example, would the Church have responded to an incoming population with different religious beliefs? How far was the Church hampered by the disruption of bishoprics and the disappearance of some religious communities and the diminution of others? Most recent studies have suggested that the conversion of the Scandinavians to Christianity must have been rapid, but little attention has been paid to the mechanics of conversion, or to the impact of conversion on the lives of the newly converted, both in a political and a day-to-day context. It is important to draw a distinction between conversion—which may have been a relatively swift process following baptism, and which can often only be documented as involving leaders—and the more long-term processes by which the behaviour of individuals and societies was Christianized. As Lesley Abrams observes, perhaps conversion 'involved leaders, while Christianization was about the people they led'. Comparison with other examples of the conversion of populations to Christianity in the early medieval period sets the events in England in context and provides useful analogies, highlighting the inadequacy of some of the rather vague ways in which conversion has been addressed with respect to the Scandinavians. Yet, while Christianity was not something that could be lightly adopted as far as the Church was concerned, the artistic creations of the tenth century in northern England, particularly monumental stone sculpture, reveal that images drawn from both Scandinavian and

indigenous cultures which carried religious overtones could sit alongside each other, and presumably had wide resonance (Stocker, this volume).

Analysis of the ecclesiastical network has much to reveal about the impact of the Scandinavians on the Church. There have been many discussions concerning the extent to which churches survived, or perished, during the Scandinavian settlements, but less attention has been paid to how the ecclesiastical provision for northern and eastern England was retained and/or re-established and how it developed in the tenth century. The demands of contemporary politics, aristocratic family strategies, and the needs of a growing population are all factors which determined the shape of the ecclesiastical infrastructure of the region. Churches survived because they retained a socially relevant role in the societies of northern England, and because they continued to be patronized by both indigenous lords and the newcomers, even if the days of substantial ecclesiastical land-holdings were now gone. Churches certainly suffered from Scandinavian assaults, and even if they were not rased to the ground, the loss of a church's estates would have been a severe blow to its ability to support itself, but they also suffered in the wake of the political situation of the tenth century more generally, losing both lands and relics in the process (Barrow, this volume; Rollason 1987b).

Material Culture

Many of the changes to our perception of the Scandinavian settlement have resulted from archaeological fieldwork, such as those major excavations conducted in English towns over the last thirty years. But archaeology has not just generated new data; it has also begun to look to new ways of explaining those data. During the last quarter of the twentieth century there have been fundamental changes in the ways in which archaeologists explain the things they dig up. For most of the century they worked within a 'culture history' framework. According to Gordon Childe (1929), repeated assemblages of similar artefacts, burial rites, and building forms reflected cultural norms which themselves represented a shared culture; others took this further, equating cultures with peoples, or even with race. Changes in culture could then be used to write culture history by which archaeologists could map the diffusion of ideas, such as farming, Christianity, or the invasion and eradication of one culture and its replacement by another. Archaeologists of the early medieval period adopted this approach with enthusiasm (see, for example, Leeds 1945; Myres 1969). With the added bonus of written sources they searched for the archaeological correlates of documented invasions by named peoples, and the conversion of pagans into Christians. Cemeteries became quarries for artefacts that would provide the distribution maps and typologies that allowed them to plot the spread of peoples through time. Hence, from the first days of the archaeological investigation of the early medieval period the research agenda was largely set by an uncritical reading of documentary sources (see discussion, for example, in Arnold 1997; Higham 1992; Lucy 1998).

For those studying the prehistoric period, covering the major proportion of past societies, such traditional approaches have come under fire from two directions. First,

during the 1960s the idea arose of 'culture as system'. Prehistoric archaeology made increasing use of scientific dating methods and of other techniques borrowed from the physical and chemical sciences. Many rejected the particularist approach of previous generations of archaeologists who they saw as being content to describe the details of culture change rather than trying to explain the process. The proponents of this generalizing and processualist 'New Archaeology', on both sides of the Atlantic, sought to develop a positivist approach of general laws of human behaviour, and to view material culture as the means by which human beings adapted to their environments, and by which society was maintained in a dynamic equilibrium (Binford 1972; Clarke 1968).

Secondly, the proponents of human beings as cogs in the machine themselves came under fire from those who believed that human behaviour was not reducible to general laws and that a systems approach did not take sufficient account of individual will and ideology. According to the various schools of thought, generally categorized as 'post-processualist', culture could not be viewed as a passive and adaptive response to predominately environmental factors. Societies constructed their environment through the way they interacted with it; they did not just respond to external pressures. 'Man the tool maker' was replaced by 'man the language user'. Material culture, like language, was used actively to construct and categorize the world. Culture was used to negotiate and create cultural identity (Hodder 1982; Miller 1985).

To some extent these revolutions in archaeological theory have left the historical agenda set for early medieval studies relatively undisturbed. Such abstract issues have seemed irrelevant within the relatively precise time depth of the first millennium AD, and for many scholars the focus has continued to be on data-gathering, with the hope that more evidence will allow chronologies to be refined to the point that traditional histories can be written. Many archaeologists of the early medieval period therefore still work within a broad culture history framework, despite the fact that archaeological evidence is rarely capable of dating to such a degree of precision. Individual artefacts are commonly classified, on stylistic and art-historical grounds, as Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian, and by implication the racial identity of their makers and wearers is attributed. However, as Trafford points out in the next chapter, early Anglo-Saxonists have tended to become more wary of interpreting material culture at face value. Perhaps the ever increasing corpus of Germanic graves compared with the lack of a fifth- or sixth-century 'native' burial rite has prompted scepticism that all the Germanic burials could be 'Germans'? If one accepts that a sub-Roman population must have survived the Anglo-Saxon invasion then one must also accept that some of them must have adopted Germanic folk-custom. For the Viking invasion, by contrast, scholars have the opposite problem for, as Halsall discusses, they are faced with a lack of pagan graves to complement the documented raids of the Great Army. However, for the later period there has for a long time been a shortage of burial evidence in general, and the lack of Vikings has more frequently led to discussion of problems of archaeological recovery than to proposals that it is possible to have Vikings without identifiable Viking burials. Nowadays we are more prepared to accept that the burial record does not necessarily mirror society.

We need to take a more critical approach to the archaeology of the Danelaw, and to start from the proposition that material culture can be used in the creation of a new cultural identity, not just in the reflection of an existing one. Many have attempted to use the burial archaeology of the region as an important diagnostic feature by which Scandinavians may be identified, yet this is, in fact, not *prima facie* evidence for Scandinavian settlement. Many furnished burials of the ninth and tenth centuries contain 'Anglo-Saxon' artefacts, and furnished inhumation burial was not a universal feature of contemporary Scandinavian society; hence, these furnished burials in England may have more to reveal about local displays of status and identity which were created in the face of contact between Scandinavian settlers and natives, rather than as a simple index of Scandinavian settlement. Moreover, the growing body of ninth- and tenth-century burial evidence from northern England places the absence of supposedly 'Viking' burial in a completely different context: we can no longer simply attribute it to the lack of recovery of burial evidence of any type from this period (Halsall, this volume; Hadley 2000).

Archaeology has traditionally played a comparatively small role in analyses of the Scandinavians in England since material evidence has always appeared to be relatively scarce. The main exception to this has been the monumental stone sculpture of northern England and the north-east Midlands. In the past, this evidence has been used to chart the direction and density of Scandinavian settlement, but it is capable of providing more sophisticated insights if we examine the political and cultural milieu in which the sculpture was created and displayed. Some regional groups of monuments may have been erected over a relatively short period of time in the tenth century. In the case of monuments in Derbyshire they may, as Phil Sidebottom suggests, have been erected as a response to the West Saxon conquest of the region. The Derbyshire crosses may represent the signifying of new regional elites and were perhaps used to reinforce claims to land. By contrast, other regions may have seen monuments erected over a comparatively long period of time. David Stocker suggests that the tenth-century monuments of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire may have been erected over time as part of the response by the regional elites to changing political and ecclesiastical allegiances. Sites where there are many monuments may, as Stocker suggests, have been characterized by a larger than normal elite group who played out their social competition in part through the erection of stone burial monuments. It is important to move on from the traditional art-historical approach to monuments and instead examine them as elite creations within social, ecclesiastical, and political contexts, at both the local and regional levels.

The ornamental metalwork of northern and eastern England is an expanding corpus of evidence and, as Gabor Thomas suggests, may have much to reveal about the impact of the Scandinavian settlements. As with other forms of material culture, this evidence cannot provide a straightforward index to the scale or locations of Scandinavian settlement. However it does allow us to assess the significance of the Scandinavian influence on production and design on artefacts which may be expected to display a more personalized choice of motifs and styles, and which, because they were familiar to both native and Scandinavian societies, may have been particularly receptive to the

exchange of motifs. Jewellery displays more localized patterns of social expression than sculpture, and there is potential to identify new material culture assemblages by analysing the increasing finds that have come to light as a result of cataloguing objects found by metal detector users. Moreover, it is apparent that the motifs and symbols displayed on metalwork were often different from those displayed on stone sculpture: in different media, individuals and communities may have been concerned to express themselves in different ways.

Settlement Archaeology

Settlement archaeology is a relatively new focus of study, in England as well as in Scandinavia. Settlements still tend to be viewed in isolation rather than as part of a cultural landscape in which they interact with other sites. The rural settlement archaeology of the Danelaw has hitherto played only a small part in debates about the scale and impact of the Scandinavian settlement. The perceived lack of settlement evidence has long been regarded as a problem of recovery and recognition; however, recent archaeological excavations and discoveries by metal detector users have revealed an increasing number of ninth- and tenth-century rural settlements. It is becoming clear that Scandinavian settlements cannot be identified on the basis of purely Scandinavian material culture, not least because the Scandinavians did not settle an empty landscape, nor did they proceed to live in isolation from the indigenous communities. The new and distinctive forms of settlement that emerged in the ninth and tenth centuries need to be set in the context of contact between different cultures, and in the context of the formation of new cultural identities. We also have to remember that so much of the evidence that we use to identify Scandinavian settlement is actually largely non-Scandinavian in origin. More useful approaches focus on the nature of the Scandinavian contacts, and on the fact that if individuals used material culture to express social or ethnic identities it is apparent that the extent to which they did so varied between different cultural media. As Richard Hall points out, many artefacts from York display whether 'by chance or subtle design' a mixture of styles and motifs, and any intended political or cultural message was diminished by the debasement of motifs apparent on at least some of the products. Rather than artefacts with Scandinavian and Northumbrian, not to mention Irish and West Saxon, affiliations being used as distinctive cultural or ethnic markers, 'compromise may have been a common underlying concern' within the complex political and cultural environment of later ninth- and tenth-century York.

Finally, we need to address the hope that non-specialists frequently espouse that scientific analysis of ancient DNA will allow archaeologists to answer questions of race. A growing body of skeletal and genetic evidence for Scandinavian settlement in England is being adduced, but there are serious doubts that Scandinavian settlers may be identified from such data. Martin Evison demonstrates that such studies have to be based on populations rather than individuals. Studies of gene frequencies in parts of England and in Scandinavia have more to reveal about admixture of populations than about the density of Scandinavian settlement. Many of the regions of England where

similarities with Scandinavian gene frequencies have been detected have very few material or linguistic indications of Scandinavian settlement, which goes some way to demonstrating the flaws inherent in the notion that biology is culture.

Future Research and New Agendas

Throughout the volume it is apparent that exciting new interpretations of the Scandinavian impact on England are possible on the basis of a re-evaluation of the existing evidence, and by asking new questions. It is also clear that the future requires interdisciplinary collaboration. In exposing new areas for research, it is often reconciling the different interpretations indicated by different categories of evidence that provides the greatest challenges. Why do the place-names apparently not fit the archaeology, which does not fit the documentary sources, for example? Individual scholars cannot hope to embrace the full range of evidence; working in isolation they have failed to realize or to account for the incompatibilities that exist. By bringing together a variety of specialists in a single volume we hope to have taken a first step towards interdisciplinary problem-solving.¹

¹ We would like to thank the contributors for their helpful contributions at the seminars held at the Universities of York and Sheffield, many of which have been incorporated into this introduction. We are also grateful to John Hines for his comments at the Sheffield seminar, and to Elizabeth Tyler for her comments on an earlier draft of this chapter. Our thanks also go to Caroline Hamilton for her assistance with the copy editing and index.

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Ethnicity, Migration Theory, and the Historiography of the Scandinavian Settlement of England

SIMON TRAFFORD

This chapter considers the attitudes of historians, archaeologists, and linguists over the past forty years to problems of the settlement of eastern England by Scandinavians in the late ninth and tenth centuries. In particular, it questions why study of that settlement has largely failed to take on board new ideas about ethnic identity and population movement that have become firmly established in other spheres of research on the early Middle Ages. Taking studies of the Anglo-Saxon settlement as my principal comparison, I intend to show not only how this new thinking has altered interpretations of that migration, but also why it has been readily and swiftly accepted into the debate. It will be argued that this is a consequence both of changes in the way in which study of the Anglo-Saxon settlement is conducted—which have drastically increased the importance of archaeological modes of explanation, and have exposed medievalists to anthropological understanding of population movements—and also of developments in the western political climate, which have placed new emphasis on ethnic identities. This has had particularly profound implications for our understanding of such an event as the Anglo-Saxon settlements, which are traditionally seen as a crucial stage in the origins of the English. By contrast, scholars studying the Scandinavian settlements have failed, in the main, to engage with new understandings of ethnicity and with migration theory. This, I shall argue, is the consequence, firstly, of conservatism immanent within the traditional structure of Scandinavian settlements study; and, secondly, of the different—and probably lesser—significance that the Viking settlement has traditionally been deemed to have had in the creation of the ‘English’ people.

The Current State of Scandinavian Settlement Studies

It is just over forty years since Peter Sawyer published 'The density of the Danish Settlement in England' (1958), a short paper which nevertheless turned out to be the founding work of a debate on the effects of Scandinavian settlement in England, and with which we are all, arguably, still engaging. In a work of calculating and devastating iconoclasm, Sawyer examined the evidence for the then-prevailing orthodox interpretation of the settlement. This had been established over the first half of the century by various leading Anglo-Saxonists of the time and stated, in essence, that the massive effects of Old Norse on the English language and naming habits, together with alleged differences in the institutions, law, society, and culture of 'English' England and the 'Danelaw' could be explained only by migration and settlement of Scandinavians on a similarly massive scale (for the traditional orthodoxy, see Jespersen 1912, 59–83; Ekwall 1924b; 1930; 1936; 1937–45; Stenton 1910; 1925–26; 1927; 1942; 1943). According to Sawyer (1962, 9), this case for large-scale migration had been overstated: the narrative accounts of the raids on which high estimates of Scandinavian numbers were traditionally based were all written by monks, the main targets of the raiders, and a group with no interest in understating the threat the raiders posed. Moreover, the vast majority of the alleged peculiarities of Danelaw society were recorded only in Domesday Book, some two hundred years after the settlement and need not be ascribed directly to the influx of large numbers of Scandinavian settlers (Sawyer 1958, 11). Even where Scandinavian influence was considerable—in the language or place-names, for example—it was not necessary to equate this with a large number of settlers. Sawyer's paper was not the first to question the maximalist interpretation of Scandinavian settlement (see, for example, Davis 1955; Binns 1956; cf. Fellows-Jensen 1975, 181–2), but Sawyer's views, as put forth in 1958 and in his book *The Age of the Vikings* (1962; 2nd edn 1971), were a more unabashed and provocative assault on traditional thinking, and it is Sawyer's name that has become most closely associated with the debate that he instigated, and in which he has remained an active participant (Wormald 1982a, 128).

The challenge thrown down by Sawyer was soon answered by various scholars, amongst whom philologists were particularly prominent, and a lively debate ensued, leading to a twenty-five-year period which saw a mass of new and fruitful research in a number of fields (the debate can be traced in Sawyer 1962; 1969; 1971; 1982; Loyn 1962; 1977; Cameron 1965; 1969; 1970; 1971; Fellows-Jensen 1968; 1972; 1975; 1980; Lund 1981; Brooks 1979). The development of the debate is very well known, for in its time it was one of the great *causes célèbres* of early medieval studies, and its progress has been traced in important review articles by Gillian Fellows-Jensen (1975) and Patrick Wormald (1982a). Little purpose would be served by a further detailed rehearsal here of its tergiversations, but for the purposes of this chapter I would like to make some initial observations on the main characteristics of the current debate. In so doing, I shall be echoing many of the comments made recently by Dawn Hadley (1997).

Scandinavian Settlement Studies: A Critique

First of all, it is important to highlight the prominence given by commentators on all sides of the debate to numbers. Sawyer's original paper was largely dedicated to questioning the *numbers* of Danish settlers, and it has been on this central point that the majority of discussion has turned ever since, overshadowing all other issues related to the settlement (e.g. Cameron 1965; Sawyer 1958, 1; Gelling 1978, 218; Logan 1991, 165–72; Wormald 1982b, 162–3; Richards 1991, 42; Loyn 1962, 49–62; 1994, 77–101; cf. Hadley 1997, 70; and Innes, this volume). Other elements of the case made by Sawyer in *The Age of the Vikings* (1962, 9), for instance his insistence that the monastic sources are an extremely poor basis for any objective assessment of Scandinavian activities, though innovative at the time, have been widely, if not, perhaps, universally, accepted and now themselves form part of a new orthodoxy (Wormald 1982a, 129). The numbers issue, however, proved uniquely divisive: there were, and are, 'minimalist' and 'maximalist' camps in Scandinavian settlement studies, and the gulf between them has remained more or less unbridgeable.

The pre-eminence given to the numbers question is very revealing, for it shows the dependence of the debate upon the assumption of a fixed and immutable relationship between ethnicity or 'race' on one side and culture on the other (cf. Hadley 1997, 82–4). The implication seems to be that if the numbers of 'Danes' and 'English' could somehow be determined precisely, then all other pieces of the Danelaw jigsaw would instantly fall into place, and the baffling complexities of the linguistic, toponymic, and material evidence would resolve themselves into a comprehensible picture of the history of eastern England in the ninth to eleventh centuries. Such a view presupposes, firstly, that the 'Danes' and the 'English' were indeed discrete biological groups or races, with recognizable and distinctive cultural practices in language, material culture, and social and political organization by which each could, and can, be discerned, and, secondly, that the clash of these ethnic groups and cultural practices was the principal dynamic in constructing the society and culture of the tenth- and eleventh-century 'Danelaw' as they are known through archaeology and later documents.

Both these suppositions may be criticized on the basis of recent thinking on the nature of early medieval ethnicity (e.g. Wenskus 1961; Geary 1983; Pohl 1991; Amory 1993). Firstly, most modern commentators no longer accept ethnicity as an objective biological fact, but see it as a subjective and flexible construct, as a belief in the unity of a group of individuals based on perceived common characteristics, whether real or imagined (Amory 1993, 3). The alleged one-to-one correlation between ethnic groups and diagnostic cultural traits in language, artefacts, culture, or society is fallacious, for there is evidence of the sharing of these traits between supposedly distinct ethnic groups and, equally, of differences in cultural practice in any or all of these areas between individuals allegedly of the same ethnic group (Amory 1993, 4). Secondly, the proposition that the supposed cultural, linguistic, and social peculiarities of the Danelaw as recorded in eleventh-century and later documents can be explained principally as the outcome of the meeting and blending of two distinct and discrete complexes of social

and cultural practice—Scandinavian and English—is, of course, undermined by this new understanding of ethnic identity. It is by no means clear that Danish or English ways of doing things were either as internally consistent or as easily distinguishable from one another as is sometimes supposed. Furthermore, a number of commentators (e.g. Hadley 1997, 75) have pointed out that much of the ‘strangeness’ of the Danelaw may in fact represent mere terminological difference between eastern and western England. Others (e.g. Jones 1961; Morris 1977) have suggested that the supposedly distinctive features of the Danelaw, far from being the consequence of the introduction of Scandinavian social and legal norms, may in fact represent continuity of pre-Viking social and land-holding systems. Although such views must now be modified in the light of new research showing evidence of both continuity and discontinuity in social organization and estate structures (Hadley 1996), the fundamental point stands that it is wrong to correlate the ‘oddness’ of the Danelaw directly with its ethnic make-up. It is important, equally, to remember that it is dangerous to treat Domesday Book as a simple or consistent guide to social changes supposedly brought about in the late ninth century; the subsequent turbulent and complex history of the Danelaw might easily have had as much, if not more, of an impact than the Viking settlements (Hadley 1996; 1997, 82). Scandinavian settlement studies, however, have failed to engage with these new ideas about early medieval ethnic identity and thus remain tied to a model emphasising the binary clash of monolithic and discrete ethnic identities (cf. Hadley 1997, 84).

A second notable feature of the debate is that there has been little attempt to understand the processes of migration and integration. The typical approach has been to concentrate upon the alleged *outcomes* of the Scandinavian settlement. Enormous energies have been expended in compiling evidences of alleged Scandinavian influence, be it loan-words in the English language (Jespersen 1912, 70ff.), allegedly diagnostically Scandinavian material culture (e.g. Wilson 1968; 1976b; Hall 1990), or the anthroponyms, toponyms, society, and law of eastern England as known from Domesday Book and other records (e.g. Stenton 1971, 502–25; Loyn 1994, 77–102; Gelling 1988, 215–36). It is then asserted that these indicate a large or small body of settlers, frequently on the basis of analogy with the supposedly better-understood examples of the Anglo-Saxon settlements or the Norman Conquest (e.g. Jespersen 1912, 71–2; Sawyer 1969, 169; Gelling 1988, 236; Fellows-Jensen 1980, 207). Thus it is, for instance, often claimed that the comparatively minor effects of the Norman Conquest on the topographical nomenclature of England ‘affords sound evidence for the effect on place-names of the advent of a foreign aristocracy unaccompanied by a body of peasant settlers’ (Gelling 1988, 236; see also Fellows-Jensen 1980); the massive numbers of Scandinavian toponyms, by contrast, can only suggest settlement by both aristocrats and peasant settlers (Gelling 1988, 220–1).

Seldom, if ever, has there been an attempt to focus attention on the processes or social behaviours which gave rise to these material or cultural outcomes—in other words, concentrating on the process of migration itself, as opposed to its alleged consequences (cf. Milroy and Milroy 1997, 74). Kenneth Cameron (1965) conjured up an entirely unattested wave of peasant settlers to explain otherwise anomalous evidence

without stopping to consider why these people should have chosen, or been compelled, to overcome the hazards and expenses of upping sticks and relocating to England. He also failed to question why the new Scandinavian aristocracy of the area, without whose active encouragement, or, at least, acquiescence, such a migration could not have taken place, might have desired the settlers to take such a step (cf. John 1996, 70). Furthermore, it has normally been unquestioningly assumed that migration will impinge upon the record in regular, predictable, and recognizable ways, and no attempt has been made to study the process of migration itself, or the type of effects it might (or might not) have upon the record. Such an approach holds clear dangers. There is no reason to suppose that even if, for instance, the Anglo-Saxon settlements, the Scandinavian settlement, and the Norman Conquest had involved similar numbers of settlers or a similar proportion of colonists to natives, they would have made the same impact upon the language, place- and personal-names, and material culture. There are too many other variables involved in the equation; different types of society (as we can probably safely assume fifth-, ninth-, and eleventh-century England to have had) with their own norms of cultural expression, standards of literacy, or attitudes to land-holding (to name but a few aspects), might be expected to respond in very different ways to otherwise similar episodes of conquest and colonization (Stafford 1985, 82). However, despite its relevance to such issues, the anthropologically derived migration theory that is now becoming familiar to early medievalists through its use in similar questions about the Anglo-Saxon settlement has not been applied to Scandinavian settlement studies (Hamerow 1994; Scull 1995; Chapman and Hamerow 1997).

The last observation that I would like to make on the character of the discourse on the Scandinavian settlements is that for some time discussion has been effectively stalled, caught between two opposing and irreconcilable paradigms. One party says that the sheer weight of evidence of Scandinavian influence can only be explained by large numbers of settlers; the other suggests that the settlers were small in number and left a considerable mark upon English culture and language by virtue mainly of their high status. These two models represent more than mere differing interpretations of a common body of evidence; for, as is well known, they closely reflect the disciplinary specializations of their proponents; maximalism is traditionally associated with philologists, and particularly toponymists, whilst the minimalist case draws the bulk of its support from archaeologists and some historians (James 1992, 106; Wormald 1982a, 135; Hadley 1997, 75). Debate has sometimes been marked by a blanket refusal to accept the types of evidence favoured by the other 'side'. In the 1990s, many commentators, faced with an appalling dearth of conclusive evidence in favour of either proposition, and with little immediate prospect of any appearing, have scrupulously been content merely to repeat the arguments of both sides, or have tried to avoid the settlement problem altogether (Price 1994, 133–4; Keynes 1998, 64–9). The tide of interest which drove debate in the 1960s and 1970s has ebbed, as academic interest has turned elsewhere, and the Scandinavian settlement question has been stranded in a state of deadlock, leaving unresolved the important issues of interdisciplinary communication and cooperation which it raises.

Comparative Approaches to Early Medieval Migration

The foregoing critique of the debate on the Scandinavian settlements does not make use of any radically new modes of reasoning or method; indeed, it is constructed largely on the basis of the application of thinking already familiar and established in other areas of early medieval study. What this review suggests is that discussion of the Scandinavian settlement question is in some sense out of step with other topics commonly debated by early medievalists (as observed in Hadley 1997, 84). Why, it might be asked, has study of the Scandinavian settlements been so slow to take on board thinking on ethnicity and population movement that is now well established in other branches of early medieval study?

A particularly apt contrast may be drawn at this point with discussion of the Anglo-Saxon settlements of the fifth and sixth centuries; indeed, many of the comments above are informed by ideas employed in that discourse. It has, of course, frequently been felt by historians that Anglo-Saxon and Viking settlements of England have something in common. The idea is explicit, both in Victorian beliefs that the Danes were the second wave of the English, 'bringing back to an England that had forgotten its origins the barbaric England of its pirate forefathers' (Green 1874, 43), or in more modern acknowledgement that the two supposed migration episodes pose similar methodological problems (Wormald 1982b, 162; Fellows-Jensen 1980; Sawyer 1978; Loyn 1962). The parallels are obvious: both involve alleged movements of barbarians from north-western Continental Europe to the eastern shores of Britain, and both have traditionally been addressed by scholars with similar questions about the numbers of settlers and the relationship between the settlers and indigenous inhabitants. The assumption that the two migrations are fundamentally similar, and that useful analogies can be drawn between them does, however, need careful examination (Trafford 1997). The specious belief that migration would have the same effect on the very different societies and cultures of lowland Britain of the fifth, sixth, or ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries has already been pointed out. A further problem with drawing comparisons between these migrations is that, like any other form of typological analysis, its conclusions are deeply vulnerable in the event of reassessment of supposedly well-established types, such as has dramatically happened over the last few years to understanding of the Anglo-Saxon settlements.

Such criticisms should not, however, be taken to mean that comparison of migrations should be seen in itself as a fundamentally flawed enterprise. It is not unreasonable that migrants in various early medieval societies might behave in similar ways in tackling the problems implicit in relocation and in establishing and maintaining their position amidst native society, or that the indigenous inhabitants of different conquered or colonized cultures might employ tactics similar to each other in constructing a *modus vivendi* with the strangers in their midst (cf. Wormald 1982a, 144–5; Hadley 1997, 94). Equally, there *are* clear parallels in the methodological problems that the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian migrations present. In each case, study was founded upon statements in narrative sources that a migration had taken place, but which gave only insubstantial

details of its nature and progress (a significant difference being, however, that whilst the sources for the Scandinavian settlement were very nearly contemporary with the events they describe, those for the Anglo-Saxon settlements were separated from their supposed subjects by, in all cases, at least a century). From this starting point, a long (Anglo-Saxon) or short (Scandinavian) tradition of scholarship has attempted to divine the character and scale of the settlements with reference to other types of evidence: through archaeology, with a search for material cultural assemblages characteristic of natives and incomers; through linguistics, including both onomastic study and lexical and grammatical analysis of language as it appears in written records (in both cases of a considerably later date than the alleged migration); and through written evidence for the society and culture of the affected area, as preserved in lawcodes, charters or Domesday Book, or for accounts of relations between natives and colonizers occurring in narrative histories (again, generally of a period far later than the supposed colonization). Such similarities in method have accompanied broadly similar trends in interpretations offered of both migrations in the post-war period; both the Anglo-Saxon and Viking settlements have seen questioning of previously strongly held beliefs in very large-scale migrations.

That similar methods have been employed in the two migration debates is undoubtedly related to the fact that very often the same scholars have worked on both. Frank Stenton and Eillaart Ekwall, the main architects of pre-Sawyer thought on the Viking settlements were both also active in the research on the English settlements, and more recently, Peter Sawyer, Margaret Gelling, Julian Richards, and John Hines are representative of many scholars who have combined research interests in both migration episodes. It is a natural consequence of the perhaps unfortunate but strongly embedded habit of treating English history between 400 and 1066 as a unity that specialists in the Anglo-Saxon settlements are normally also very familiar with the Scandinavian settlements and *vice versa*. The transmission of methods and ideas developed in one to the other is established and routine, frequently, it must be said, to their mutual benefit. This, however, makes the apparent gulf that has opened up between Scandinavian settlement studies and the rest of the discipline over the past twenty years or so all the more remarkable and deserving of the explanation which the rest of this chapter is an attempt to produce. In looking at why Viking settlement study has not, in the past twenty years, taken on board the various theoretical developments detailed above, it is first useful to look briefly at the way in which Anglo-Saxon settlement studies *have* changed in that time, and to explore the sources of the thinking that have altered so profoundly its interpretation.

Anglo-Saxon Settlement Studies

In the 1960s and 1970s, as previously suggested, Anglo-Saxon settlement discourse bore a more than superficial similarity to Scandinavian settlement discourse. Over the course of the twentieth century there had been a shift away from the sorts of extremes common in the late nineteenth century, which had suggested a complete extermination

of the Romano-British and insisted upon an almost purely Teutonic ancestry for the English with only the smallest infusion of Romano-British blood (Freeman 1888, 74; Green 1874; 1881; Stubbs 1874–78; on nineteenth-century Anglo-Saxonism, see MacDougall 1982; Burrow 1981; on the development of thought on the Anglo-Saxon conquest in the twentieth century, see Higham 1992, 1–16; Arnold 1997, 6–18; Lucy 1998, 12–18; Trafford 1997, 44–55). Doubts about the hypothesis of population replacement were aired regularly in the first half of the century, and some modifications made to the narrative presented by Gildas and Bede as archaeology and toponymy were marshalled to the cause (Chadwick 1907; Leeds 1913; 1936; Collingwood and Myres 1936; Lennard 1934; Arnold 1997, 8–9; Higham 1992, 4; Lucy 1998, 13–15; Gelling 1993, 51; Hamerow 1994, 164–5). Nevertheless, the fundamental and time-honoured paradigm of migration on an overwhelming scale remained largely intact and broadly supported by historians, archaeologists, and philologists alike up to at least the end of the 1970s (Higham 1992, 8; Hamerow 1994, 164–5).

It is striking that there was no equivalent to Sawyer's wholesale challenge to a mass migration hypothesis in study of the Anglo-Saxon settlements anywhere near as early as 1958; the Scandinavian settlements were a rather less hallowed area of study, where such orthodoxies were, perhaps, rather easier to question. It was only in the late 1960s and 1970s that some of the long-standing questions over the traditional view of the English settlements began to crystallize into more substantial revisions and objections, particularly in the hands of scholars working on the Anglo-Saxon settlement of the north of England (Eagles 1979; Faull 1977; 1979; cf. Hamerow 1994, 165). The 1980s and 1990s, however, saw challenges to established thinking on an altogether unprecedented scale, as the idea of mass migration was assailed on a whole range of theoretical and methodological fronts (Hamerow 1994, 165; Higham 1992, 14). Here I should like to examine a number of these more closely, for they hold the key to the way in which Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian migration studies have diverged.

First, the 1980s saw a new mood of scepticism towards the clutch of early written sources that contain the traditional migration narrative. They were criticized as heavily tendentious and chronologically separated too far from the events they purported to describe, and the migration story itself was stigmatized as formulaic and suspect, for it bore marked similarities to the origin myths of several other European nations (Dumville 1977; Sims-Williams 1983a; 1983b; Reynolds 1983). Most historians now would treat the early descriptions of English origins as saying far more about the political needs of the seventh and eighth centuries than about the population history of the fifth or sixth (Reynolds 1983; 1985; Yorke 1993).

Such pessimism amongst users of written evidence accorded well with attitudes being put forward by the new, evangelical wave of so-called 'processual' archaeologists entering Anglo-Saxon studies at this time (see below). Some were only too happy to declare the period fully prehistoric, to shuffle the historians out of the way, and to ensure thereby a drastically enhanced importance for archaeologists (Arnold 1984; 1988; Hodges 1989, 4; cf. Hamerow 1994, 165–6). Not surprisingly, such a viewpoint has not received the complete acceptance of historians (Yorke 1993, 45, 49; Higham

1992, 15), but there can be no doubt that the last twenty years have seen a major re-ordering of the way in which study of the early Anglo-Saxon period is carried out. It is now archaeological research agendas, and modes of explanation favoured by archaeologists, that dominate early Anglo-Saxon studies and determine the direction of its continuing development (Hines 1990, 19).

The repercussions of this seismic shift in disciplinary make-up are several and are still emerging. For migration studies it has definitely had profound implications, because archaeologists, and the early processualists in particular, brought with them ideas on the subject that were both very different from, if not openly antagonistic to, those of most historians, and which were informed by theory drawn from anthropology and ethnography to which early Anglo-Saxon studies had never previously been exposed. The early processualists, or New Archaeologists, were manifestly and expressly opposed to explanatory schemas that gave prominence to exogenous and unpredictable phenomena such as population movement, preferring instead to analyse past cultures by understanding them as systems interacting with their natural environment. Migration to them was a dragon that needed slaying, for it was tainted with racism and had obscured the true, techno-environmental causes of change (Kristiansen 1989, 211; Hamerow 1994, 166; Scull 1995, 71–2).¹ Influenced by this, Chris Arnold (1984; 1988; 1997), Richard Hodges (1989), and Nicholas Higham (1992) have put forward explanations of the transition from Roman to Saxon which downplayed the role of migration, arguing instead for an elite conquest by a small number of settlers, leaving the vast majority of the peasant population unharmed and unchanged. Such views have not attracted universal support (Hills 1992; Hamerow 1994; Scull 1993; 1995; Welch 1992; Wormald 1997, 321), but they have, at the very least, initiated a useful and continuing discussion on whether, and how, population movement can be recognized and characterized on the basis of the material record.

The processual antipathy to migration was, however, by no means the only product of the increasingly theoretically aware early Anglo-Saxon archaeology. The appearance of 'post-processualism' brought with it a markedly less hostile approach to migration.² Prompted by the exhumation of migratory explanation by prehistoric archaeologists that had been occurring as early as the late 1970s (Adams, Van Gerven, and Levy 1978; Rouse 1986; Kristiansen 1989; Champion 1990; Anthony 1990), a number of Anglo-Saxonists have advocated the application of anthropological migration theory in order to understand the processes of population movement (Hamerow 1994; 1997; Scull 1995; Chapman and Hamerow 1997). Recent migration studies have established many broad

¹ For a further discussion of the aims of processual or 'New' archaeology see the comments in Hadley and Richards, this volume.

² Post-processualist approaches to archaeology reject the notion that culture may be viewed as a passive and adaptive response to mainly environmental factors, and look rather to historical actors as 'active' social agents. They are also concerned to explore the ways in which material culture was used to construct and negotiate social and cultural identity.

principles of modern population movement. They show that it tends to be preceded by 'scouts' who relay information back about the area of destination; that migration tends to take place along well-established routes or 'streams' to a specific entry point; that for every stream a counter-stream back to the place of origin tends to develop and that migrants are generally not a random sample of the population at the place of origin, but are made up of those able and willing to overcome the difficulties of movement. This is normally because of either pressing negative factors such as oppression in their place of origin (pushes) or overwhelming attractions and opportunities in the destination (pulls) (Lee 1966, 54–7; Anthony 1990, 899–905). Some misgivings might, admittedly, be expressed about the applicability of theory derived from discussion of post-industrial revolution and post-colonial societies to early medieval phenomena, but the attitude amongst those Anglo-Saxonists who advocate its use is that some familiarity with its principles is better than none at all (Hamerow 1994, 174). This is an active and growing field of research (Scull 1995, 75–7).

Of a rather different type from the developments in Anglo-Saxon settlement studies discussed so far, although at times connecting with them, is the reassessment of the nature of early medieval ethnicity. For a start it came from a rather different source; it was by no means a development limited to Anglo-Saxon scholarship, but was indicative of a far more general post-Second World War turning away from the preoccupation with race and racial characteristics which had been a dominant theme throughout the humanities in the first half of this century. For early medievalists the pioneering work in the field was Richard Wenskus's (1961, 110) analysis of the nature of the Germanic tribes, which argued that ethnic identity was not an objective fact and need not imply shared culture; it was merely the sense of group self-consciousness, *Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl*, based upon a set of perceived characteristics, which could themselves change or be redefined according to need (cf. Amory 1993, 3). Thus ethnicity was a fluid and changeable construct; the early medieval 'peoples' who had formerly seemed to be monolithic and unchanging entities could now be seen as groups comprising individuals of many different backgrounds and descents, drawn together by the mutual benefits of collective identity. Wenskus's approach initiated lengthy discussion on the topic in Europe, and was fundamental to the reassessment of the continental *Völkerwanderung* (Wolfram 1989; Geary 1983; 1988; Pohl 1991; 1997; Amory 1993; 1994; for a contrasting view, see Heather 1998). In the 1980s the Anglo-Saxons were subjected to a similar reconsideration (Reynolds 1985); their common origins were questioned and the idea of their unity portrayed as the fictional construct of later origin myths (Reynolds 1983, 389–90; 1985, 399–405; Wormald 1983, 120–9; 1994).

The result of these new ideas has been what can only be described as a paradigmatic shift in the way in which the Anglo-Saxon settlement is treated. Few commentators now would seriously adduce Bede's migration narrative as a straightforward and accurate description of the translation from Roman to Saxon, or at least not without serious reservations (Yorke 1993). Nor is it any longer acceptable to make the simplistic equation of the overwhelming absence of supposedly Romano-British elements in the archaeology of early Anglo-Saxon England, or the extreme paucity of Romano-British

loans in the Old English language, with models of complete population extinction or displacement. Instead debate has been reframed in terms of an extended period in which 'there was a relatively intense forging of new identities amongst the groups of folk of mixed origins settled in England' (Hines 1992, 317). For most commentators, population movement is now but one issue in a far broader analysis of social and political development in post-Roman Britain, which embraces long-term endogenous cultural and economic development and acknowledges frequent and widespread indications of continuity in land use (Hamerow 1994; Scull 1995). Rather than looking to the clash of two ethnic polarities as the source and explanation of all change, scholars have shifted their attention to how and why cultural identities were renegotiated in response to political and social circumstances. The rise of symbolic approaches to material culture has made an important contribution to this interest, as commentators have focused on the active manipulation of cultural behaviours in the construction and assertion of gender, status, and identity (Pader 1982; Richards 1987; 1992; 1995; Härke 1990; 1992; Hines 1992; 1994).

What to do with the Anglo-Saxon migration nevertheless remains an issue at the forefront of the minds of historians, archaeologists, and philologists; the very variety of opinions expressed on the matter is one of the most notable features of the current debate (Hamerow 1994, 164–6; Higham 1992, 13–14). Even within the last ten years, published opinion has reflected every hue of a spectrum of views. Most notice has been taken of the minimalists (Arnold 1984; 1997; Hodges 1989; Higham 1992) and those who met their arguments with reformulations of population movement hypotheses which embraced new ideas about ethnicity (Hamerow 1994; 1997; Scull 1993; 1995), but, quite apart from these, there are still defenders of the old-fashioned mass migration hypothesis (Welch 1992; Gelling 1988, 51). Many commentators, noting that the observed cultural, archaeological, and linguistic complexes of early Anglo-Saxon England could equally plausibly have been reached by any of a wide range of processes, have suggested that various combinations of these may have been obtained in different areas, and resigned themselves to the fact that in general their exact nature will be irrecoverable (Arnold 1997, 21; Scull 1995, 75; Härke in Ausenda 1997, 417). One recent commentator, perhaps not entirely seriously, has even suggested looking to the Viking settlement as a useful (and, presumably, better understood) comparative model, in order to help solve the many problems of Anglo-Saxon migration scholarship (Dumville in Ausenda 1997, 417). Nevertheless, the vitality and complexity of the debate must be a healthy sign, and testament to the electrifying effect that new thinking on ethnicity and migration has had on a discourse that twenty-five years ago was nearly as hidebound as is that on the Scandinavian settlements today.

The changes in Anglo-Saxon migration studies can only be understood against the background of developments in the field of medieval studies and in the wider world. In the former category might be placed the increasing prominence of archaeology and archaeologists, and in the latter the widespread disenchantment with racist conceptions of ethnic identity (cf. Kristiansen 1989, 211–12; Chapman 1997). But, it might be argued, this background is by no means unique to early Anglo-Saxon studies: Viking

Age scholars have been subject to changing currents in the humanities and the wider world just as much as have early Anglo-Saxonists, and, equally, the rise of archaeology has been even more meteoric in Viking Age studies than it has been for the early Anglo-Saxon period. Moreover, as previously noted, it is frequently the same scholars who are involved in both debates. Why then have Scandinavian settlement studies not responded to new thought on ethnicity and migration in the same way or to the same degree as have Anglo-Saxon settlement studies?

The explanation must embrace a number of factors; just as it is a combination of causes that has led to such drastic changes in the Anglo-Saxon settlements discourse, a monocausal explanation of why Scandinavian settlement studies have *not* been so affected must be deemed inadequate. Thus it is important to mention the types of evidence used, the differing relative importance of practitioners of each of the early medieval disciplines in producing interpretations of the settlements, and, perhaps above all, the rather different roles that the English and Viking settlements have been called upon to play in the English historical tradition. In so doing, it should be made clear that the differing receptions of new thinking on ethnicity in the two migration discourses are not, or not necessarily, occasioned by actual differences in the migrations and settlements themselves, but are a consequence of the way in which historical knowledge of each has been constructed in the present, in itself an immensely complicated and intricate process. Having said that, there is no single cause why the Scandinavian settlements have not been subjected to the same reconsideration as those of the English; it is, on the other hand, quite easy to point to an important factor, the modern pre-occupation with national identity.

The Viking Settlement and the Origins of the English

It is probably not too great an overstatement to say that the half century since the end of the Second World War has seen a re-thinking of the nature of Englishness (and the complacently self-satisfied vision of English history that is its traditional complement) unprecedented since that following the Norman Conquest itself. This re-evaluation commenced with the post-war contraction of British imperial horizons and with retreat from the assumption that had been the ideological underpinning of colonialism for two centuries or more: that English world leadership was natural and rightful. Subsequent post-colonial immigration led to the emergence (or, perhaps, the re-emergence) of a multicultural society in Britain, calling further into question what Englishness or Britishness meant (cf. Champion 1990, 217). The growing debate took a new twist from the 1970s, with British membership of the European Community and European Union. Most recently, the granting of Scottish and Welsh devolution have focused attention on Britishness, Englishness, and the relationship between them. The direct result of this has been a marked resurgence in discussion of the nature of English identity; the creation of a political climate in which, for instance, in 1993 the then Prime Minister, John Major, famously felt moved to volunteer his own vision of what being English (although he used the word 'British') means: 'long shadows on county grounds, warm

beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pools fillers', a nation of 'old maids bicycling to holy communion through the morning mist'.

The debate in England/Britain is, of course, a mere part of a new preoccupation with ethnicity felt throughout Europe. Recent European history (since 1989 in particular) has concentrated attention on ethnicity, nationalism, and the nature of 'peoples', be it as a result of the ever closer union of Western Europe, or, more sinisterly, through events in the East, and especially, of course, in the Balkans (cf. Chapman 1997, 18). Such a political climate has had its effect on the academic imagination. In the words of the president of the Royal Historical Society, 'Peoples are back on the historian's agenda' (Davies 1994, 1). Evidence of the new preoccupation can be found in a recent crop of works by historians of all periods—not just early medievalists—examining questions of ethnicity and nationality (Smith 1986; 1991; Hobsbawm 1990). In the same way, the publication of the Blackwells 'Peoples of Europe' series seems to confirm that many still believe that histories of particular nationalities remain a useful way of ordering thought about the past. Early medievalists have been amongst the most active participants in this scholarly activity; virtually by definition it is in the Dark Ages that the origin myth of every major European nation is located. England is no exception to the general trend. The formation of English identity is a topic to which a number of Anglo-Saxon scholars have recently turned their attention (Wormald 1983; 1994; 1995; Foot 1996; Hines 1994). In traditional accounts, of course, the coming of the English to England was portrayed as the crucial step in the process—interestingly, most of the recent work has placed more emphasis on the eighth to eleventh centuries (Wormald 1995, 26; Foot 1996, 25). Nevertheless, the new interest in national identity has arguably been the principle inspiration for the renewed discussion of the Anglo-Saxon migration; such, at least, has been the stated opinion of some of the main participants (Higham 1992, 16; Hines 1994, 49). No further proof of the ability of the English *Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl* to transcend not just social or geographical, but also temporal, boundaries is necessary than the fact that modern historians can believe that, in studying the origins of the 'English' in the Anglo-Saxon settlements in the fifth century, they could be shedding light upon the character of a continuing entity of the 'English' in the twentieth (cf. Reynolds 1985, 397).

In this there is a significant difference between the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian settlements. Whatever their significance, the Scandinavian settlements in England did not create an ethnic identity that survived to the present (Reynolds 1985, 407–10). Nobody would, with any degree of seriousness, attempt to claim any sort of continuity of ethnic feeling with the Scandinavian settlers of the Danelaw. Instead, when such things are considered, the Scandinavian settlers are frequently treated as a factor, positive or negative, in the development of 'English' identity (Stenton 1971, viii; Bassett 1989b, 27). It is all too easy still to caricature the Danelaw settlers as an ephemeral and localized irritant in the broader sweep of an English history that starts with the *adventus Saxonum* and continues in the present (Bassett 1989b, 26–7, where they are likened to football hooligans). This failure of the Scandinavian settlements to spark an ethnogenetic episode in their own right may certainly be cited in explanation of the

absence of any scholarship devoted to them by English historians until the twentieth century. Equally, it has meant that there is no modern ethnic group attempting to analyse its own identity with reference to its migratory origins in the early medieval past. Thus, during the reassessment of modern English identity of the last twenty years or so, it is study of the English settlements, not the Scandinavian, that has been the recipient of increased enthusiasm.

Scandinavian Settlement Studies: The Disciplinary Context

Alongside issues associated with nationalism, the organization of study of the Scandinavian settlements and the disciplinary specializations of those involved in it have also affected the way in which it has responded to new thinking on ethnicity and migration. It was earlier argued that the transition to a climate more ready to accept innovation and new perspectives in the Anglo-Saxon settlement discourse was associated both with a collapse of faith in the narrative sources for the migrations which threw serious doubt on the traditionally accepted story, and with a dramatic expansion in the aspirations of archaeologists. The new generation of archaeologists, who were both less sympathetic to traditional theories of mass migration as an explanation of culture change, and more open to anthropologically inspired ideas about the nature of population movement, were instrumental in setting new research agendas for the topic. For the Scandinavian settlements, however, the new perspectives of theoretical archaeology have been markedly less influential, and the exposure of debate to the anthropological and ethnographic thinking that have been an important part of the revolution that has taken place in Anglo-Saxon settlements study has been commensurately smaller.

It is not easy to explain why this is the case. Traditionally, the role played by archaeology in interpretations of the settlement was not large. Stenton hardly mentions it at all, and Sawyer (1958, 7) restricts his comments upon it in 'The density of the Danish settlement in England' to the observation that the paucity of known Scandinavian graves in England is consonant with minimal settlement. In David Wilson's assessment (1968, 293) of the archaeological evidence for the Vikings in England, he conceded that the light it threw upon the settlement was 'very pale'. The main cause of this reticence was, undoubtedly, the sheer poverty of the record: neither graves, nor portable artefacts, nor settlements of diagnostically 'Scandinavian' type had ever been found in large numbers anywhere in England, despite persistent searching (see Halsall, and Richards, this volume); the only class of artefact showing pronounced Scandinavian influence to turn up in considerable numbers in England is sculpted stone, and it is therefore on this that attention has focused when archaeological evidence *has* been brought into the debate on the settlement (Binns 1956; Wilson 1968, 299; Sawyer 1971, 163–6; Fellows-Jensen 1972; Bailey 1980, 207–37).

In the 1970s and 1980s, however, archaeological investigation of the Viking Age expanded meteorically, with large scale urban excavations at York and elsewhere, and important international popularizing museum exhibitions. The greater involvement of archaeologists brought an infusion of the processualist antipathy to exogenous

explanation to the debate on the settlements and breathed new life into the minimalist position (Richards 1991, 42). Nevertheless, there remains a marked bias in Viking Age archaeology in England in favour of artefactual research, whilst rural settlement sites remain relatively poorly understood and under-studied (Richards, this volume). Archaeology continues to be employed largely in a search for material culture alleged typical of Scandinavians, a search which has proved, for the most part, fruitless. This failure, in turn, has been taken to indicate rapid integration of Scandinavians into the native population, a position which has, however, recently been criticized (Hadley 1997, 75). Without progressing further into this complex issue, it is important here merely to note that archaeology is still being used to answer questions drawn from historical sources—about Danes and English—on the basis of allegedly recognizable ‘ethnic’ material culture.

A further impediment to the incorporation of new thinking on ethnicity and migration in discussion of the Scandinavian settlements has been the ambivalence or hostility of proponents of particular disciplinary specializations. The close correlation between minimalist and maximalist ‘sides’ and practitioners of particular disciplines has already been noted. Difficulties in interdisciplinary communication and co-operation, which are an issue throughout early medieval studies, are writ large when it comes to the question of Scandinavian settlement. This is never more true than with reference to the toponymic evidence. Toponymy is widely regarded as the most important (and, according to some, the only) surviving support for the case for a maximalist settlement (Hadley 1997, 75; Loyn 1994, 78; John 1996, 70). Toponymists themselves have been amongst the most forceful proponents of maximalist migration, not just for the Vikings, but also in discussion of the Anglo-Saxon settlements. The ideological underpinning of this view remains that language can be equated with ethnicity and that evidence of considerable influence must imply considerable numbers of settlers (cf. Hines 1990, 18). This apparent unwillingness to take on board more modern conceptions of the relationship between ethnicity and culture has certainly bewildered some non-toponymists, and prompted some rather hostile comment (Reynolds 1985, 403; Higham 1992, 190).

But the reluctance of toponymists to embrace the new thinking is not perhaps so surprising if it is appreciated how central a place the explanation of migrations has always had for place-name scholars. It is no coincidence that many of those most closely associated with the foundation of the English Place-Name Society (for instance Eilaart Ekwall, Allen Mawer, and Frank Stenton) were also leading luminaries in the construction of the maximalist view of the Scandinavian settlement. When laying out the principles of English place-name study in the first volume of the society’s survey, Ekwall (1924a, 17; 1924b, 56) explicitly stated that one of its chief aims was to shed light on the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian migrations by establishing the proportions of names given by natives and incomers in each case. Nor had the situation seemingly changed by 1988 when Margaret Gelling (1988, 19) wrote in the second edition of her deservedly popular introduction to the study of English toponymy that ‘the mixture of languages in the stock of place-names constitutes a vital part of the evidence for estimating the mixture of races in the composition of the nation’. Given how important

a goal for their discipline toponymists have felt the illumination of migration to be, their hostility to any suggestion that place-names may be unsuitable for such a purpose should occasion no surprise; it seems to have been felt as an attack on the very validity of the discipline as a whole. Nor, unfortunately, have place-name studies seemed to benefit particularly from the important flow of sociolinguistic theorizing on language contact over the past twenty years. There are, it would seem, still considerable obstacles to be crossed if toponymy is to be brought back into the mainstream of enquiry on the Scandinavian settlements, or migration studies as a whole.

This is not the only difficulty associated with the philological evidence. The vast amount of debate that there has been on the place-names has led to an over-concentration on toponymy at the expense of all other types of linguistic evidence (Barnes 1993, 66; Hansen 1984, 55). Indeed, one recent discussion of arguments about the settlements treats the linguistic evidence as entirely composed of toponymic evidence (Hadley 1997, 71–5; but see now Hadley 2000, 329–40), and this is by no means an uncommon position amongst non-philologists or even among philologists themselves (cf. Reynolds 1985, 401, n. 10; Hansen 1984, 55). For most non-specialists, discussion of Norse influence on England is restricted to the place-names and the list of loan-words compiled by Otto Jespersen (1912, 65–83), together with Uriel Weinreich's statement (1953, 92), made famous by Peter Sawyer, that 'Even for extensive word transferring, large numbers of bilingual speakers need not be involved and the relative size of the groups is not necessarily a factor' (Sawyer 1971, 170–1; see also Barnes 1993, 69; Jespersen 1912). To judge by citations at least, most historians and archaeologists seem to be entirely in ignorance of the mass of literature on the Norse-English linguistic interface developed by sociolinguists as part of a new concern with creolization and pidginization (Hansen 1984; Kisbye 1982a; 1982b; Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Hines 1991; Barnes 1993; see also Townend, this volume). To be sure, the failure of interdisciplinary communication works both ways; Thomason and Kaufman's creolization hypothesis, published in 1988, claimed Sawyer's 1971 edition of *The Age of the Vikings* as 'the latest word' on the archaeological and historical data for the settlement (Thomason and Kaufman 1988, 360; cf. Barnes 1993, 73). It is to be hoped that Matthew Townend's chapter in this volume may go some way to alleviate this, but the breakdown of communication between those working on the historical and linguistic evidence for the settlement is a real and serious problem for students of Viking Age England and one which must be overcome if work is to proceed.

Conclusions

Study of the Scandinavian settlement in England has become stuck in an impasse which is some forty years old, and has failed to escape the terms of the debate drawn up in the 1950s and 1960s by Peter Sawyer, Kenneth Cameron, Henry Loyn and others. It has not introduced new thinking on ethnicity, and instead sees ethnic divisions as all-important and as cultural dynamics in themselves. By contrast, I have examined discussion of the Anglo-Saxon settlements which, over the past twenty or so years has been revolution-

ized by not just new ideas about ethnicity, but a panoply of new thinking, together with new personnel and new types of disciplinary method. Viking settlement studies, I have suggested, have not responded in the same way for two main reasons: firstly, the impetus for change has not come through the new concentration on ethnicity; secondly, the disciplines involved, and the structure of the relation of those disciplines, has discouraged outward-looking and the application of new types of thinking. My intention here has not been, however, to imbue modern thinking on ethnicity and migrations with panacea-like qualities to dot the i's and cross the t's of the Viking settlements question, nor even to suggest the thrust of Anglo-Saxon settlements study over the past twenty years as a model for scholars of the Scandinavian settlement to follow. I would hope merely to have thrown a little light on how and why study of the Scandinavian settlements has come to where it is, in the hope that a better understanding of this will allow it to move forward.

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Part 2. Lordship, Language, and Identity

The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking Age England

PAUL KERSHAW

Texts of Accommodation in the Early Middle Ages

If, as Robert Bartlett (1993) has recently argued, one of the defining themes of central medieval history was western Christendom's expansion into new territories, then the preceding centuries were characterized by its inverse: the accommodation of incoming peoples into pre-existing societies and political units. In this respect the processes of accommodation and integration that took place between Anglo-Saxons and incoming Scandinavians from the ninth century onwards are but single elements in the broader history of the strategies of co-existence found in the early Middle Ages (Goffart 1980; Chrysos and Schwarcz 1989; Pohl 1992; 1999). One strand of that history was the production of written guidelines, codes, or treaties that sought to formalize and to regulate interaction between incomers and established communities (Wielers 1959; Classen 1966; Pohl 1999, 75–133). This paper explores one such text, the treaty between Alfred of Wessex and the Danish leader Guthrum, drawn up some time in the 880s, and known since Liebermann's day as *Alfred-Guthrum* (hereafter *AGu*) (Liebermann 1903, 126–9; 1916, 82–6; translated in Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 171–2).¹ This short document, extant in two distinct vernacular versions enshrined the terms of the two

¹ Unless otherwise stated all the translations of *AGu* follow the text given in Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 171–2. The abbreviations for law-codes in this chapter accord with those of Liebermann 1903, ix–xi (e.g. the law-codes of Alfred are abbreviated as *Af*, Edward the Elder (*Ew*), Athelstan (*As*), Edgar (*Eg*), Æthelred II (*Atr*). For first citations full bibliographical information is given, but for subsequent citations, reference is made to the relevant clause of the document.

kings' agreement, setting out the boundary dividing their territories, establishing *wergelde* equivalencies between the *Englisc*e and the *Denisce*, and procedures for settling a narrow range of disputes and for regulating trade. This chapter takes a new look at *AGu*, examining it as evidence for the creation of social identities, for West Saxon understanding of Scandinavian society, and for the reconstruction of contemporary conceptions of how accommodation between different social groups could be formalized at the level of idealized, prescriptive law. In doing so I shall also locate *AGu* in the wider frame of Alfredian culture. By taking as my focus a written script for interaction, rather than the material and cultural evidence for its actual forms, this paper aims to provide a counterpoint to some of this collection's other contributions.

Within the corpus of Anglo-Saxon legislation *AGu* is one of three codes that addressed relations between ethnic groups—the others being the early tenth-century text known as the 'Ordinance of the Dunsæte' (Liebermann 1903, 375–9; Noble 1983, 103–9; Thorpe 1840, 352–7) and Æthelred II's own treaty with the Vikings from the early 990s (*II Atr*) (Liebermann 1903, 220–5; EHD, I, no. 42; Gordon 1937, 24–32; Lund 1987, 264–8; Keynes 1991, 81–113; Wormald 1999, 232–3, 330). All three provided regulations to minimize the possibility of disputes arising, and to resolve them if, and when, they did. Only two, however, *AGu* and *II Atr*, are treaties in our sense of the term, that is to say agreements intended to settle conflict, and to prevent its renewal. The 'Ordinance of the Dunsæte' is a rather more complex code which, whilst regulating the interplay of distinct ethnic groups living on the limits of established royal authority, seems not to have been produced in the wake of immediate open conflict (Jones 1979, 117–32; Gelling 1992, 112–19; Noble 1983, 103–9; Sims-Williams 1990, 9–10; Wormald 1999, 381–2). Apart from these three surviving texts, only two other legal sources carry any reference to the existence of written peace treaties. The first is the so-called 'Laws of Edward and Guthrum' (hereafter *EGu*) which, whilst claiming to be an agreement made between Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Guthrum, was actually a code written in the early eleventh century by Archbishop Wulfstan II, addressing questions of sanctuary, the prohibition of pagan practice, and the behaviour of mass priests, amongst other matters (Liebermann 1903, 128–35; Whitelock 1941; Wormald 1999, 389–91). Whilst it has its own place in the history of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural interaction in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries it is demonstrably not a ninth- or early tenth-century peace treaty with Guthrum, although Wulfstan's segue of it with the genuine *AGu*, to create a composite text of Anglo-Scandinavian interaction, sought to make it appear as one (Wormald 1999, 389). The second piece of evidence for a written settlement has a much stronger claim to authenticity—Edward the Elder's Exeter code (*II Ew*) (Liebermann 1903, 144) which contains an allusion to the lost *friðgewritu* (written peace settlements) that addressed legal procedures outside Edward's 'own kingdom', 'in the east, or in the north' (*II Ew*, c. 5.2), and specifically those that governed harbourers of criminals (Lund 1976, 186; Keynes 1990, 234; Wormald 1999, 379–80, on its relationship to the mid-tenth-century 'Alfred-Guthrum Appendix' in the 'London' edition of *Quadripartitus*). This fleeting reference hints that the extant Viking treaties themselves may represent only a small part of a wider body of texts that

addressed Anglo-Scandinavian interaction in the late ninth and early tenth centuries. Certainly Wulfstan, composing the prologue to *EGu*, felt comfortable alluding to precisely such a tradition (*EGu* Prol.).

However, whilst the extant treaties are distinct in as much as they were given over almost entirely to the terms of interaction between different groups, precedents do exist for royal interest in the subject from earlier English law. The seventh-century 'Laws of Hlothere and Eadric', for example, contained provisions under which a Kentishman might buy property in Mercian London, provisions which seem designed to prevent accusations of wrongful possession arising around trade, and to involve royal agents in the monitoring of the propriety of the transaction (Liebermann 1903, 9–11; EHD, I, no. 30, c. 16.1–3; Wormald 1999, 102–3). This is a reminder that the need for kings to monitor interaction between their subjects and neighbouring, potentially hostile peoples was not in itself a novel situation in Anglo-Saxon England, nor was *AGu*'s emphasis on trade as a potential flashpoint. What was new in the late 880s was the need to establish means of dealing with a new regime and a newly established frontier. There was also—regardless of the actual number of incomers—a re-ordered society in East Anglia which included a socially significant proportion of Scandinavian settlers whose status and identity were more likely to have been defined in their birthplace than the Mercian and East Anglian territory which they occupied. In some senses *AGu* might be compared with the Carolingian treaties of the later ninth century, themselves products of a newly reconfigured political map intended to stabilize relations and articulate the *concordia* between the variously aligned rulers of the East and West Frankish and the Lotharingian kingdoms (*Cap. Reg. Franc.*, II, nos 204–7, 227, 242–6, 250–1, 261, 268; Schneider 1964).

'*AGu*' and the Birth of 'the Danelaw'

Scholars concerned with Scandinavian settlement have seized upon *AGu* for the evidence it provides for the clear demarcation of English and Danish authority: 'Up the Thames, and then up the Lea, and along the Lea to its source, then in a straight line to Bedford, then up the Ouse to Watling Street' (*AGu*, c. 1). This frontier, which *AGu*'s author(s), drawing on a term more commonly associated with charter-bounds, termed the *landgemæra* (land limits), has inspired generations of cartographers to furnish studies of Anglo-Saxon history with a map of southern England neatly split between Viking ruler and English king (e.g. Roesdahl 1981, 48; Hill 1984, 45; Keynes 1997, 53). This is no less true today than when R.H.C. Davis (1982, 803) made the same observation nearly two decades ago. With little recognition of either the treaty's southern English focus or the teleology implicit in projecting an eleventh- and twelfth-century concept of the Danelaw back into the later ninth century (as pointed out by Stafford 1985, 115; Hadley 1997, 84–5), *AGu* has frequently been regarded as nothing less than a foundation charter for 'the Danelaw' itself. Such attitudes have been held despite the evident ephemerality of the political map *AGu* sketched out. Whilst the treaty's prologue, in both its variants, emphasised its permanence, extant evidence hints

at a significantly more complex shift in the patterns of power on the eastern flanks of Wessex and Mercia in the later ninth century (Davis 1982, 803; Stafford 1985, 136; Blair 1994, 97–8). The value of *AGu*'s *landgemæra* as a guide to the definition of the extent of Danish settlement is equally confounded by the distribution of a cluster of Scandinavian settlement-names south-west of the line, in modern-day Northamptonshire (Hill 1984, 45; Keynes 1997, 65; Hart 1992, 7). Whilst such unsupported place-name evidence has been viewed as highly problematic, it may at least indicate Scandinavian settlement of some kind, and at some stage, in the areas that according to *AGu* were under English control (Hadley 1997, 69–75).

It is worth stressing this scholarly fascination with *AGu*'s account of a linear Anglo-Danish frontier because this has carried through into the majority of the published discussions of the text (Davis 1982, 803–10; Dumville 1992b, 1–14). Dumville's provocative argument for re-reading the boundary as running down, rather than up-river, with the consequent re-ordering of the territories held by Alfred and Guthrum has found some (Smyth 1995, 93–4), but far from universal, acceptance. Serious problems exist with what Keynes (1998, 32–3) has termed 'the Dumville Line' and the arguments that lie behind it, not least of chronology, and his view that 'we may set it, respectfully, to one side' is surely correct. In recent scholarship only Keynes and Lapidge (1983, 311–3), in the commentary on their translation of the text, and Lund (1987, 261–3), in an article focused primarily not upon Alfred's but Æthelred's relations with the Vikings, have addressed *AGu* as a whole, assessing its clauses for evidence of Alfred's peace-making strategies with Guthrum's forces. Lund's (1987, 256–8) analysis of *AGu* is particularly important for its attempt to place it, firstly, within the wider fabric of Anglo-Saxon law, adducing parallels for its prescriptions elsewhere in the pre-Conquest legal material, and, secondly, in the wider context of treaties between established powers and Scandinavian incomers. His analysis of the early tenth-century Byzantine treaties with the Kievan Rus also serves as a reminder that the regulation of potential disputes with Scandinavian arrivals exercised emperors in the East as much as kings in the West.

'*AGu*' and Alfredian Court Culture

As a written text, rather than the mutually agreed, oath-sealed set of terms it recorded, *AGu* was, without doubt, an Alfredian court product. Together with the much more substantial *domboc*, it is one of Alfred's two legal codes (Wormald 1999, 265). *AGu* was written sometime between the settlement of Guthrum's forces in East Anglia in 880 and his death in 890 (ASC s.a. 880, 890). Arguments for a more precise dating have foundered on the lack of firm corroborative evidence. Dumville's (1992b, 1–14) argument that *AGu* enshrined the terms agreed between Alfred and Guthrum at Wedmore in May 878, in the wake of the West Saxon victory at Edington, fails to account for Guthrum's lack of any direct connection with East Anglia in mid-878. The Chronicle is clear that East Anglia was only settled (*gesæt*) after Guthrum's forces had quit Cirencester (ASC s.a. 880; Davis 1955, 26–7). Nor can the inclusion of London on

the West Saxon side of *AGu*'s frontier be used any longer as an indicator of dating. Blackburn's re-evaluation of the coinage issued by the London mint in the late 870s and 880s has led him to conclude that the Vikings were not in control of the city at that time, and hence to dismiss the prevalent view that *AGu* had to date from 886 or later, when, according to the conventional reading of the Chronicle entry for that year, London was believed to have passed into Alfred's hands. Consequently, Blackburn argued (1998, 105–23), *AGu* might date from any point between 880 and 890.

'*AGu*' and the Idea of *Angelcynn*

The one remaining indicator for a more detailed dating for *AGu* lies in the treaty's ethnic terminology and its implications. In *AGu* Alfred was presented as the ruler of 'all the English' (*eall Angelcynn*), legislating and coming to terms with Guthrum with the advice of the English *witan*. The Chronicle for 886 recorded the mass submission that year of 'all the *Angelcyn* that were not under subjection to the Danes' (ASC s.a. 886; Keynes 1998, 23–6). In its prologue the treaty's opposition of Alfred and *eall Angelcynn* with Guthrum and 'all the people (*beod*) in East Anglia' closely replicated this configuration (see also Alfred's obituary in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: ASC A s.a. 900). Even discounting the argument that the treaty demands a *post*-886 dating on the grounds of Alfred's occupation of London, 886 was still the year when Alfred's position as leader of the English was cemented by what some have seen as a special oath of allegiance (Keynes 1998, 24–5). This may mean, as Stenton (1971, 260, n. 3) argued, that the political groupings we see in *AGu* were only conceivable after the oath had been given, and hence that, regardless of the political position of London in the 880s, a date between 886 and 890 is still the most likely for *AGu*'s composition. The emphasis placed upon Englishness in *AGu*, and the evident importance of the 886 oath-swearing for Alfred's assertion of himself as leader of the 'free' English, jointly suggest that the composition of the treaty and the swearing of the oaths were expressions of the same desire to promote the English character of Alfred's authority, a desire also apparent in a number of other Alfredian works, the preface to the later law-code, and the royal styles of the few surviving charters of the late 880s (Nelson 1993, 154–5; Wormald 1994a, 11, 14–15; Foot 1996, 26–8).

The association of *AGu* with the submission of 886 is plausible, but falls short of dating the treaty's production to the period 886x890 with absolute certainty. *AGu* was certainly composed at some point in the 880s, and the implications of even this, quite broad, composition date are important. First, *AGu* may predate the production of Alfred's law-code by nearly a decade, if the argument that Asser's silence about its existence is indicative of a date of composition after 893 is given any credence (Wormald 1999, 120–1, 286). This makes it the earliest legislative statement we have from Alfred, and it is noteworthy that in *AGu*, as much as in the later code, Alfred was legislating for the English as a unitary body. More than this, *AGu* may well have been the earliest of any texts produced by the Alfredian court or its related circles. The Old English 'Pastoral Care' is conventionally viewed as the earliest fixture in the Alfredian

canon, and assigned a date of composition around 890, the year of Guthrum's death (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 35; Bately 1988, 95). At the very least contemporary with the 'Pastoral Care', it is likely that *AGu* predated it by several years. Nor is *AGu*'s primacy any less well marked if viewed from the perspective of the history of Anglo-Scandinavian relations. It is the earliest source for the West Saxon recognition of Guthrum as King of East Anglia and, implicitly, of the Danish occupation of eastern England as a whole. Moreover, *AGu* was the first text to recognize the social standing of, and to give a legal identity to, the Scandinavian settlers. In this respect it marked the first stage in the accommodation of Scandinavian society within the frame-work of English law, an overture to a theme of later tenth- and early eleventh-century legislation played out in Edgar's *Wihthordesstan* code (Liebermann 1903, 206–15; EHD, I, no. 41; Lund 1976, 181–95; Wormald 1999, 126, 317–20), the 'Laws of Edward and Guthrum' (Whitelock 1941; Wormald 1999, 132), and Æthelred's sixth law-code (Liebermann 1903, 248–59), amongst others, and, ultimately, the 1018 agreement at Oxford that both English and Dane would live by 'Edgar's law' (Liebermann 1903, 278; EHD, I, no. 47; Wormald 1999, 346–9; see also Innes, this volume). *AGu* also pre-empted tenth-century legislation's absorption of Scandinavian terminology, referring to the Danish social class of *liesengum*, known as *leysingi* in later Norse sources (Pelteret 1995, 87–8, 128–9, 297–8), and to Scandinavian *healfmearcs* in the reckoning of *wergeld* equivalencies. In these respects, as much as the structural and idiomatic character on which he was primarily commenting, Wormald (1999, 286) was right to note that *AGu* anticipated both the legislative style and concerns of the tenth century. As we shall see, it also played an important part in a second aspect of early English legal history, the tendency of incoming rulers, Scandinavian and Norman, to issue law in their newly acquired realms.

What of the actual texts of *AGu*? The treaty survives in two variant vernacular versions both of which are in the late eleventh-century legal collection, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 383 (Ker 1957 no. 65; Richards 1986, 181–6; Keynes 1990, 233–4; Webster and Backhouse 1991, 267; Wormald 1999, 228–36; and below). Liebermann's belief in the survival of a third Old English version, in a lost manuscript used by Lambarde, was rejected by Sisam (1953), and more recently, surely definitively, by Wormald (1998, 237–75). A third version does exist, however: the Anglo-Norman Latin recension in *Quadripartitus* (Liebermann 1903, 127–9; Keynes 1990, 234; Wormald 1994b, 111–47). Whilst modern taxonomists of early English law have universally described *AGu* as a treaty, in both versions it defined itself unambiguously as a 'peace': 'this is that *frið*'. Until supplanted by the Danish loan-word *grīð* in the course of the later tenth century, *frið* was the commonly used term for peace settlements, occurring repeatedly in the Chronicle's account of Anglo-Danish treaties (Fell 1982–3; Lund 1987, 256–7; Davies 1996, 2; Wormald 1999, 326–7). Despite sharing this self-description, the two OE variants (Liebermann's B and B2) differ in significant respects. B is the fuller of the two, containing several clauses absent from B2. The *Quadripartitus* text follows B. Moreover, the two texts open with markedly different prologues:

B: Ðis is ðæt frið, ðæt Ælfred cyninc 7 Gyðrum cyning 7 ealles Angelcynnes witon 7 eal seo ðeod ðe on Eastænglum beoð ealle gecweden habbað 7 mid aðum gefeostnod for hy sylfe 7 for heora gingran, ge for geborene ge for ungeborene, ðe Godes miltse recce oððe ure.²

B2: Ðis is þæt frið, ðæt Ælfred cyng 7 Gyðrum cing 7 ealles Angelcynnes witon 7 eal seo ðeod ðe on Eastenglum beoð, 7 gesworen habbað, ge for hy sylfe ge for heora ofsprung.³

Here, and later in the body of the treaty, B used the first person, whilst B2 consistently used the third. Possession of the frontier, for example, shifted from B to B2. ‘Our boundaries’ in B read ‘their boundaries’ in B2, a difference of perspective that led Wormald (1999, 285) to term B2 a ‘depersonalised’ text. The combination of first-person voice with the greater formality of phrasing led Keynes (1990, 234) to conclude that B was an official text, ‘closer to the issuing authorities’. B2, conversely, was unofficial. This may well be true; there are cases from ninth-century Francia where similar collective decisions were recorded by participants and observers in ways that revealed their respective roles (McKitterick 1989, 34). However, there can be no certainty that these differences of grammar, style, and content were present in B2 when it was initially committed to writing, rather than at a later stage of what seems to have been a complex process of transmission. What is more certain is that the first-person perspective, together with the treaty’s sense of Guthrum and his followers as the other side and the notion of ‘us’ as synonymous with the *Angelcynn*, made *AGu B* a text with a particularly powerful and coherent charge of English *wirgefüh*, a point to which I shall return.

An equally telling indicator of B’s ‘official’ status may lie in the political ideas it contains. One, the notion of *Angelcynn*, has already been briefly addressed. B described both the authors and the audience of the treaty by a chain of four doublets: ‘these are the terms, which King Alfred and King Guthrum [. . .] have all agreed upon [. . .] on their own behalf and for their subjects, both living and unborn, who are anxious for God’s mercy (*miltse*) and ours’. This last pairing is absent from B2. It is, however, a suggestive clue for grounding B’s prologue in the immediate cultural context of the Alfredian court. This pairing of earthly and heavenly authority occurs in several tenth-century legal texts (Liebermann 1903, 148, 171; *IA*s, c. 5; *As Alm*, c. 1.1; *IV As*, c. 3.2),

² Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 171: ‘This is the peace which King Alfred and King Guthrum and the councillors of all the English race and all the people who are in East Anglia have all agreed on and confirmed with oaths, for themselves and for their subjects, both for the living and for the unborn, who care to have God’s favour or ours’.

³ ‘This is the peace that King Alfred and King Guthrum and all the councillors of the English race and all the people who are in East Anglia have agreed upon, and confirmed with oaths, for themselves and their offspring’.

and was to characterize Wulfstan's thought in the early eleventh (Wormald 1999, 342, 390, 457, with references). Before either, however, it was an element of late ninth century, West Saxon conceptions of rulership. It occurs in several Alfredian texts, but, most significantly for our purposes here, in another judicial context, Asser's image of Alfred as the diligent overseer of judges (Asser c. 106). In the final chapter of his *Life*, Asser described Alfred quizzing those who had passed what he considered an unfair sentence, and reminding them that they enjoyed the authority of judges through 'God's authority and my own' (Asser c. 106; Wormald 1999, 119).

What of mercy, the actual royal characteristic invoked? Mercifulness was an established characteristic of the good ruler by the late ninth century (Anton 1968, 401–3, 429–34). Its presence here is hardly novel. Nevertheless, there are telling resonances between the prominent position allotted to *miltse* in Alfred's treaty and a substantial number of other Alfredian texts. The Preface to the Old English 'Soliloquies' (Carnicelli 1969, 48; Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 138–9), for example, described salvation, and entry into the heavenly kingdom, through a decidedly earthbound analogy, that of the shift from loan land to the permanence associated with book land. Permanent occupation of land in the heavenly or an earthly kingdom, was the result of lordly *miltse*. This is the same association between the receipt of a lord's mercy and the occupation of land under his authority present in the B prologue. God's mercy was invoked in the prayer that closed the Old English 'Consolation of Philosophy' (Sedgfield 1899, 149; Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 137), and it was a quality that Alfred himself drew attention to repeatedly in his law-code, citing both the Old Testament (Liebermann 1903, 15–89; EHD, I, no. 33; *AfProl*, c. 36, citing Exodus 22.27), and the New; mercy was, with humility, one of the two characteristics that Christ taught to man (*AfProl*, cc. 49, 49.7). In this context it is interesting to consider the added emphasis upon mercy given in the portrayal of several historical rulers in the Old English 'Orosius' (Bately 1980, xciv, 126–9, 134–5, 156; V.12; VI.2; VI.38; Whitelock 1966, 79), a work which, if not part of the Alfredian canon, is generally considered to be a product of his wider circle (Bately 1988, 97).

Viewed in the light of these later works *AGu* stands again as a groundbreaking work. It demonstrates that, even before the main enterprise of the 'Alfredian Renaissance' had begun, possibly even before several of its main protagonists had entered his service, Alfred had begun to formulate at least one of the ideas they would take up. That the earliest extant Alfredian text was a peace treaty is significant in its own right. Recent studies have emphasised the central place of Solomon in the royal imagery of Alfred's court (Scharer 1996, 191–2; Howlett 1995, 283–309; Wormald 1999, 121–4). In addition to being the wise and just ruler, Solomon was the archetypal *rex pacificus* for early medieval political theorists, a powerful motif in the ruler imagery of Alfred's near-contemporary Charles the Bald (Staubach 1993, 234–60), and peace, as much as justice, wealth, and wisdom, played a key part in the political thought of the Alfredian court (Kershaw 1998, 180–7). That *AGu* B's prologue, and purpose, is so close to other expressions of Alfred's thought gives powerful support to Keynes' argument for its 'official' status.

Guthrum 'Cyning'

Alfred was, of course, not the only ruler to be described in these terms in *AGu* B's prologue. Whilst the written treaty may have emanated from Alfred's circle it nevertheless claimed the authority, not of one king, but of two, and to enshrine the laws that the two had jointly agreed. The newly baptised Guthrum shared with Alfred the identity of a merciful and peaceful ruler, his own authority was coupled with that of the Christian God whom he had only recently come to recognize (ASC s.a. 878; Charles-Edwards 1998, 47–62). Viewed from an Anglo-Scandinavian perspective *AGu* is the earliest legal code to carry the authority of a Scandinavian king. From this standpoint it is an interesting exercise to place the treaty, and its evocation of contemporary Christian rulership, alongside his coinage, the only evidence from Guthrum's reign in East Anglia to bear his name. These coins carried, in various orthographic permutations, Guthrum's name-in-God, Æthelstan (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 318–19; Bibire 1998, 165). The choice of this baptismal name, a process in which Guthrum, and perhaps also Alfred himself, played an active part, may have been intended to evoke associations with earlier Æthelstans, possibly the King of East Anglia (d. 845), or even Alfred's own brother, sub-King of Kent from 830 until the early 850s (Keynes 1993, 124). Whatever motivated the precise choice of Æthelstan the name was selected almost certainly as part of a conscious attempt on Guthrum's part to present himself as a Christian, and as an English, king. It must be stressed that, with the probable exception of his baptism, there is nothing to suggest that the impetus for Guthrum's engagement in such acts as law-making and coin-issue came from Alfred (Abels 1998, 165). There is at least one hint that this choice had some impact on West Saxon perceptions of him. In 890, the Chronicle recorded his death, terming him 'the northern king [...] whose baptismal name was Æthelstan' (ASC s.a. 890). Within only a few years of Guthrum's death the name would, of course, find a new bearer in Edward's eldest son. It is a nice question to consider to what extent the name borne by the new *ætheling* evoked memories of the East Anglian king at the West Saxon and, more particularly, at the Mercian court in the very late ninth century.

If we wish to think in terms of the shifts in cultural and ethnic identity that may have taken place amongst the Scandinavian incomers in the late ninth century it is salutary to note that all the extant evidence for Guthrum's behaviour after Edington shows him striving to associate himself with the existing practices, and identities, of the Anglo-Saxon ruling elite. In addition to functioning in its own rather idiosyncratic way as a case-study of a new situation demanding a reconstruction of the markers of ethnic identity (Geary 1983, 15–26), this evidence for Guthrum emulating pre-existing notions of royal authority carries implications for how we approach *AGu*. It is, after all, a text which showed Guthrum not only as a Christian, but also as a legislator, jointly issuing a code with Alfred, his fellow king and spiritual kinsman. In this respect it might be compared with the near-contemporary, jointly promulgated Carolingian treaties such as those between Charles the Bald and Louis the German made at Aachen and Meersen (Germany) in 870, or between Louis the Stammerer and Louis III at Fouron (Holland)

in 878, amongst others (*Cap. Reg. Franc.*, II, nos 250–1, 246). In as much as law-making was an established act of Christian kingship, an identity that Alfred was to explicate at some length, of course, in the introduction to his later *domboc* (*AfProl*, cc. 49.9–10; Wormald 1999, 416–29), Guthrum's participation in the legislation that *AGu* codified can be seen as a further, complementary strategy by which he sought to project an image of legitimate rulership. It is interesting in this context to note that, according to the early eleventh-century account of Dudo of St-Quentin, one of Rollo's first acts following the treaty of St-Claire-sur-Epte in 911 was, like Guthrum's some twenty years before, the promulgation of laws about theft and violence (Christiansen 1998, 51–2). Doubted by some historians (Bates 1982, 22), accepted by others (Yver 1969, 317–9), Dudo's account of a recently established Viking leader associating himself with established authority through the medium of law has resonances with later Viking Age England. In the early eleventh century, Dudo's contemporary Cnut was to follow precisely such strategies in 1016, 1018, and in the 1020s, using law-making as a medium through which to assert authority and stress legitimacy (Kennedy 1983, 72–81; Lawson 1992, 565–86; Lawson 1993, 56–75; Wormald 1999, 345–55). Issuing laws in his newly won East Anglian kingdom Guthrum pre-empted, indeed, may even have established, this strategy. In the later eleventh century William the Conqueror legislated in a manner which not only carried the spirit of Guthrum's attitude to law, but which also drew upon its letter. Stressing his own legitimacy by publicly subscribing to the Confessor's laws in his 'London Charter' (Liebermann 1903, 486; EHD, II, no. 18; Garnett 1986, 113; Wormald 1999, 398–9), William later introduced the set of *Murdrum* fines covering the slaying of Frenchmen who had come to England after 1066 (Liebermann 1903, 483–4), and which reused *AGu*'s actual *wergeld* equivalencies in their reckoning (Garnett 1986, 125–7). The parallels between Guthrum's position in the ninth century and the Conqueror's in the late eleventh clearly were clearly not lost on at least one Norman legist, nor the possibilities of drawing upon what may well have been perceived of as an Anglo-Saxon tradition of scripting accommodation (Richards 1986, 181–2). Who was the legist? The leading candidate is the former Archdeacon of Le Mans, chaplain and chancellor of the Conqueror, Maurice, the second post-Conquest Bishop of London (1085–1107), and a figure with close associations with CCCC MS 383, the sole extant manuscript to contain *AGu* (Richards 1986, 183; Wormald 1999, 236). Clearly, the historical tradition of texts of accommodation with which I began was recognized, and exploited, in eleventh-century England.

Scripting Dispute Settlement: Murder, Theft, and Trade

If one dispenses with the chapter divisions imposed on the text by Schmid and Liebermann (Schmid 1858, 106–9; Liebermann 1903, 126–9; Dammary 1994, 254–61), and looks to the text itself, *AGu* can be seen to comprise four discrete sections: the prologue; the actual definition of territory; and then the clauses dealing, first, with the actual crimes that may arise between the two sides and, second, with the conduct of lawful trade between the English and the Danes. The statements about compensation

and process for dispute settlement follow on sequentially, widening the range of possible events ('and if', 'and if') as they unfold. This sequence has its own internal logic, moving from the terms of compensation for proven or declared homicide, whether of an Englishman or a Dane, and the *wergelds* to be paid, through to unproven accusation of *manslihte*, and the process by which individuals accused of homicide were to clear their name, down to cases involving wrongful possession of moveables. In the case of the fuller B text, this meant two statements absent from the briefer B2: first, a declaration that all cases involving goods of more than 4 mancuses were to be treated as seriously as accusations of homicide, and, second, the statement that 'every man must know his warrantor (*getyman*) when he buys slaves, or horse, or oxen'. This clause signalled a shift in focus, for the emphasis was not upon dispute settlement so much as the regulation of everyday trade. Thus, as *AGu* unfolded, the gravity of the crimes gradually diminished, the focus moving from the ameliorative to the preventative. Both B and B2 closed with a final section which returned to the actual circumstances in which the treaty was drawn up, alluding, as in the prologues, to the ritual agreement of the treaty, joint oath-swearing, and the spoken agreement of terms: 'and we all declared, on the day when the oaths were sworn'. It also reiterated the limits of Alfred and Guthrum's authority in the declaration that the two kings' subjects, free or servile, could not cross between the two sides without permission. Here again *AGu* foreshadowed Alfred's later law-code, in which he sought to restrict the uncontrolled movement of men between lords of different 'districts' (*boldgetæl*) under the control of different kings (Liebermann 1903, 70, c. 37; Lund 1986, 262; Wormald 1999, 274). The fear of defection from Alfred's authority to that of the Vikings was grounded in reality. A charter of 901 recorded a grant of land that had been formerly held by the ealdorman Wulfhere, a presence at the West Saxon court from 854 until his disappearance c. 877/8 (S362 (B595); Nelson 1986, 53; Abels 1998, 152). The charter claimed that the forfeiture of the land was the result of Wulfhere's desertion of both his 'lord Alfred and his *patria*', in contravention of his loyalty oath. Wulfhere may have followed the former Mercian ruler Burgred's lead and fled overseas; more probably he had thrown in his lot with the Vikings. It is unlikely that the traffic of defectors was one-way, a fact *AGu* recognized in its statement that 'no slaves or freemen may go over to the *here* without permission, any more than any of theirs to us'. It is worth remembering in this context that Asser recorded the presence of *pagani* at Alfred's court, and a young man of Viking parentage amongst the monks of Athelney, his personal foundation (Asser cc. 76, 94). Some of these Scandinavians who held Alfred as their *hlaforð* may well have arrived on English shores in the ranks of the Scandinavian armies.

This clause restricting movement also has parallels from the Frankish world. Closely comparable restrictions on the movement of subjects between kingdoms occur as early as the sixth-century treaty of Andelot (France) (*Cap. Reg. Franc.*, I, no. 6), as well as in a number of intra-familial treaties of the ninth century (e.g. *Cap. Reg. Franc.*, II, no. 205, c. 4). We need not postulate cross-Channel influence at work here, however, so much as engagement with common problems. 'Promises not to poach each other's faithful men', observed by Nelson (1990, 291) when comparing Andelot and its ninth-

century successors, 'were of prime governmental importance as statements of the ideology that underpinned the regime'. What was true of Merovingian and Carolingian Francia, was also true of the kingdoms of Alfred and Guthrum, and acutely so at a time when the political map had been redrawn as radically as it had in late ninth-century England.

Only at *AGu*'s close does an explicit reference occur to mutual suspicion between the two sides in the injunction that, if trade was to take place between the *here* and 'us', the English, hostages were to be given as 'peace pledges'. B2 described this as 'to go lawfully' (*mid rihte*). B, with its preference for more ambitious language, employed a more ornate, not to say opaque, phrasing: 'hostages are to be given in pledge of peace, and as evidence that the party has "a clean back"'. The phrase *clæne bæc hæbbe* has no direct analogue in the Old English corpus. Innocence in the sense of purity and cleanliness occurs several times in Old English law, however. The tenth-century *gerædnes* of the London peace guild, for example, described the innocence of a thief's wife in terms of her cleanness (Liebermann 1903, 173–83; EHD, I, no. 37; *VIA*s, c. 1.1), whilst later in the century Edgar enjoined the English clergy to avoid wrong-doing and immorality and to live a 'clean life' (Liebermann 1903, 206–15; EHD, I, no. 41; *IV Eg*, c. 1.7). Underlying all these phrases was the Scriptural linkage of cleanliness and innocence (e.g. Job 33.9), and perhaps also that between purity and peacefulness. This latter association was, of course, one also implicitly evoked in the use of baptism as a peacemaking rite (Cramer 1993, 159–65; Kershaw 1998, 164–9). The conduct of trade between potentially, or previously, hostile groups could make for a highly volatile situation wherever it was undertaken, but Smyth has suggested a particular event underlay its inclusion. In 882 a group of Vikings ambushed a party of unwary men serving Charles the Fat as they entered the Viking camp at Asselt (Holland) to trade (Smyth 1995, 93). Whilst this debacle may have been known to the West Saxons, and a sound knowledge of the Vikings' continental activities is well attested in Alfredian sources, it seems likely that, having dealt with the Vikings for several decades by the time *AGu* was drawn up, and Guthrum in particular since the 860s, the West Saxons scarcely needed cross-Channel reminders to remain wary of their Scandinavian opposition.

Alfred and Guthrum's peace settlement was tempered with realism. It did not seek to stop all violence *per se* between English and Danish communities, but rather sought to foster the peaceful resolution of disputes through the due process of law. This was, then, a peace within which there was an acceptable level of violence, and acceptability turned on the possibility of its ready resolution. In this respect, as in others already discussed, *AGu* prefigured Alfred's later law-code, in itself probably influenced by Carolingian legislation, in which a series of clauses sought to channel disputes along the route of judicial resolution (*Af*, cc. 41–2; cf. *Cap. Reg. Franc.*, I, no. 33, c. 32; discussed by Le Jan 1995, 91–2). Crucial to any such settlement, of course, was a recognized means by which reparation could be made between the two previously antagonistic sides, and the recognition of the legal status and blood price of the two in the legal procedures of the other. *AGu* 2 set the *wergeld* payments for *Englisce* and *Denisce* for two social ranks:

next, if a man is slain, all of us estimate Englishman and Dane at the same amount, at eight half-marks of pure gold, except the *ceorl* who occupies rented land (*gafollande*) and 'the freedmen of the Danes' (*liesengum*); these also are estimated at the same amount, both at 200 shillings.

The equivalencies are a reminder that not only were differing cultures and political allegiances in contact in the settlement of the late 870s, but also distinct economic and social systems (Chadwick 1905, 24–6; Samson 1991b). Keynes and Lapidge (1983, 311–2) suggested 8 half-marks to be the equivalent of approximately 1280 shillings. Such a value corresponded approximately to the 1200-shilling *wergeld* of the *geneat* in Ine's code (Liebermann 1903, 88–123; EHD, I, no. 32, c. 19), and the highest social class in Alfred's law-code (*Af*, cc. 10, 18.3, 28, 40). In Old Norse law, *leysingi* were the highest of two categories of manumitted slave who, whilst enjoying autonomy with regard to marriage and the distribution of their property, nevertheless maintained some obligations to their former owner in the form of food dues (Pelteret 1995, 297–8). Occupying the ground between the free and the unfree, they held a social position that might be seen as roughly equivalent to the *ceorl* whose obligations of tenancy rendered him less than fully independent. It is of some significance for an understanding of the relationship of *AGu*'s image of Danish social structure and the actual configuration of society in the eastern England that Pelteret (1995, 72, n. 114, 297–8) has pointed to a substantial number of place-names which were derived from the Old Norse *leysingi*.

This same clause set the value of the *ceorl* living on rented land and his freedmen at 200 shillings. This is the same two-tier division between *eorl* and *ceorl* to be found in Alfred's laws (*Af*, c. 4.2). Keynes and Lapidge (1983, 312) have rightly noted this clause's implications, that *ceorls* occupying their own land were to be included in the upper category, and that this meant that for purposes of their legal status, their *geld* status was effectively raised from free to noble. They suggested that this inflation was intended as a disincentive to attacks upon freemen—by making it prohibitively expensive to compensate their kin *AGu* sought to price violence out of most people's reach. Such an interpretation, however, presents problems. First, it assumes that most violence was premeditated, a reasoned consideration of the cost of resolution preceding any unlawful assault. Second, from a practical point of view, this inflated *wergeld* may have led to less of a willingness to pay compensation, or may even have meant that the payment of *wergeld* was simply too expensive. In such situations peaceful settlement may simply not have been a financially viable option. In at least one comparable situation, the western Anglo-Welsh frontier communities addressed by the 'Ordinance of the Dunsæte', we can see precisely the opposite strategy employed. Here, *wergeld* ratings in cases involving the English and the Welsh were halved rather than inflated, a strategy which, alongside other mechanisms in the code such as the imposition of time-limits and recourse to the ordeal, seem to have been intended to foster the rapid resolution of disputes in a sensitive zone (*Duns*, cc. 1.1, 2, 2.1, 4, 5, 8.3).

There is no clear explanation as to why *ceorls* occupying their own land would be counted as noble. However, it must be remembered that *AGu* represents an early attempt

to find equivalencies between two, potentially quite differently structured societies, whose knowledge of the nuances of the other's social organization may not have been substantial. Indeed, the extent to which the Scandinavian *here* actually had coherent social organization is a moot question. Under such circumstances we might well expect simplified models of social order to come into play. Viewed from this perspective the text of *AGu* might be seen as a piece of Anglo-Saxon ethnography as much as law, an attempt to make sense of Scandinavian society in familiar terms. As both Asser (c. 100) and the Old English 'Boethius' make apparent, Alfred was interested in notions of social organization (Sedgefield 1899, 4), and the detailed account of his northern expeditions and the peoples given by one of the *pagani* at Alfred's court, Ohthere, to his *hlaford* and recorded in the Old English 'Orosius', reveals an equally lively curiosity about the homelands and social life of the northmen (Bately 1980, 13–15; see also Asser c. 71). Numerous authors sought to fit the Vikings into their own world-views (Page 1987), Alfred was part of a much smaller group who seems to have sought to understand them on their own terms, and *AGu* was part of that enterprise.

The process of establishing guilt in a case of killing was the subject of *AGu*'s next clause, where the same two-tier social model invoked in the setting of *wergeld* differentials was in operation. While a king's thegn, presumably the equivalent of the 8-half-mark/1200-shilling man of the previous clause (*AGu*, c. 2; Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 307), was to clear himself with twelve men of equal status. Anyone beneath this rank was to swear innocence with eleven of their equals and one king's thegn. From other legal evidence it is clear that a king's thegn had a direct relationship with the ruler himself. Chadwick long ago noted that the Old English 'Bede', for example, if not itself an Alfredian product in the strictest sense at least a late ninth-century work (Whitelock 1962, 57–90; 1966, 77–9; Bately 1988, 103), repeatedly translated *minister regis* as *cyninges þegn* (Chadwick 1905, 84). On one level, therefore, this statement is a recognition of the general notion that a man of high status was to be exonerated by the sworn testament of his peers. At another level, however, it would appear that the involvement of king's thegns reflected Alfred and Guthrum's wish for their own agents to be engaged in dispute settlements involving members of the lower orders. Such a reading is supported by *AGu*'s subsequent statement, that the same was to hold for any other dispute involving goods over 4 mancuses, disagreements over livestock or goods. As a mancus was worth 30 pence, this ruling implied that any case involving goods worth 10 shillings was to be treated with the same seriousness as an accusation of homicide. A general indicator of the kind of goods that might fall within this category can be gleaned by once more referring to 'Ordinance of the Dunsæte', where a pig was worth 8 pence, a sheep 12 pence, an ox 30 pence and a horse 30 shillings. A slave was worth a pound (*Duns*, c. 7; Pelteret 1995, 86). Thus, cases involving the possession of, say, ten sheep or four oxen were to be treated as seriously as a killing, and like a case of homicide, they were to involve a king's thegn in their resolution. The overall thrust of this clause was to seek to involve royal agents in many cases arising between the two sides, in effect maximizing the degree of royal input into the regulation of Anglo-Scandinavian relations.

Identities and Ethnicities

I have already suggested how, in the evidence it provides of Guthrum acting in the manner of an English king and in the broader attempt to bring English and Scandinavian societies into some kind of parity, *AGu* is a text fundamentally engaged with the expression of notions of identity. In particular, it contains much explicit evidence for the existence in the 880s of complex ideas of overlapping identities based upon ethnicity, social status, geographic location, and political loyalty.

The treaty opened, as we have seen, by naming the two contracting rulers. Alfred, as one might expect in an English text, being named first. Both B and B2 went on to describe the other participants in the settlement whose role was to collectively confirm its terms by oath-swearing. On the English side, as we have seen, this was the *witan* of all the *Angelcynn*. However, *AGu* was less concrete when it came to their opposite numbers. Rather than an ethnically defined elite-group, both prologues recorded a much vaguer body; 'all the people (*peod*) in East'. In other ninth-century usages *peod* could denote 'people' in the broadest sense, but it also had a narrower meaning, 'subjects' (Green 1998, 124–7). It occurs in this sense several times in the Chronicle entries up to 892, almost exclusively when discussing the relationship of ruler and ruled (ASC E s.a. 654, 794, 823, 867). To more traditionally minded Danelaw scholars, the lack of a readily defined elite to oppose the English *witan* might be viewed as indicative of the independent, egalitarian, free peasant character of Scandinavian society, but such views have been closely questioned in recent years (Hadley 1997, 69–70). A better explanation for the lack of an explicit ethnic definition to Guthrum's rule lies in the belief that the generality of *peod* covered a mixed population of settlers and pre-existing inhabitants (Dumville 1986, 20, n. 97, citing the personal comments of Brooks and Lund in support of such a reading). It may also have denoted a general vagueness on the part of the English as to the political organization of the Scandinavian settlers.

Identification through political loyalty of the kind underlying the term *peod* occurs at various stages in the text. As we have already seen, it was defined by those who received Alfred and Guthrum's *miltse*, but also geographically, by the limits of the *landgemæra*, across which nobody could stray without royal permission. However, *AGu* could conceive of the individual, rather than the group, identity of at least some of Guthrum's subjects in ethnic terms. We have seen how in *AGu* two *wergeld* equivalencies were given exclusively in this fashion: *Englisce* or *Denisce*. Here ethnic difference was defined within, and coexisted with, a framework of legal parity. Whether all the Scandinavian incomers were actually Danish or comprised a heterogeneous mixture who may, or may not, have had a common sense of ethnic identity is an open question (Hadley 1997, 86–8). The link between names and ethnicity is no longer viewed as straightforward as was once thought (Amory 1994, 3; Sawyer 1994, 18–20; Hadley 1997, 88–9; and this volume), but it is still intriguing to consider the possible implications of Bibire's observation (1998, 165) that Guthrum's coinage carried a noteworthy number of non-English, Upper Frankish, and High German moneyer-names, and to wonder what proportion of Guthrum's followers may not have been Scandinavian by

either birth or acculturation. This point aside, what seems clear is that members of the *here* were classed as Danes in the texts of *AGu*, that is to say, in an English source viewing Scandinavian society from an 'outsider' perspective. Again, we may be seeing a practical simplification of what were, in actuality, highly complex and potentially mutable identities. Guthrum, after all, was a case of one Scandinavian settler rapidly changing at least some of the recoverable identifiers of his ethnicity, and it is worth emphasising that in no contemporary source was he described as a Danish king. In fact, rather than reflecting ethnic difference, the actual process of establishing modes of accommodation between Scandinavians and the English that we see in *AGu* may have played a part in creating them. Many of the Scandinavians settlers may indeed have been Danish, but those who were not may have found themselves labelled as such in the settlement of disputes. Certainly they would have had they been involved in settlements that in any way adhered to the norms laid down in *AGu*. Interestingly, a comparable process of simplification in ethnic identification has been seen at work in immediate post-Conquest culture: 'As far as the Anglo-Norman chancery was concerned William's subjects consisted of two, and only two "races"—French and English' (Garnett 1986, 114–15). Amory (1994) has argued for the central role of law in the definition of the new ethnic identities that emerged in the contemporary Carolingian world, and Hadley has argued for the relevance of this model for the development of 'Danelaw' identities (Hadley 1997, 85, citing Amory 1994, 23; see also Innes, this volume). In the part played by English and Danish ethnicity we have, in *AGu*, a case-study of precisely this process at work. As much as this process of interaction may have helped to shape a Danish identity in eastern England, it may also have given solidity to the development of the idea of Englishness. There is no doubt that *Angelcynn* was a 'buzzword' at Alfred's court from c. 880 onwards, playing an important role in Alfredian political image-building (Foot 1996, 26–38; Keynes 1998, 25), but the need to set the terms for peaceful interaction between Guthrum's subjects and his own, and to define the limits of his own authority, gave Alfred a specific opportunity to breath life into the notion of Englishness (Wormald 1994a, 11, 14–15).

Conclusions

AGu is a deceptively complex document. Ideologically charged, particularly in the ornate B text, it reveals much about late ninth-century approaches to the creation and maintenance of peaceful relations between English and Scandinavian communities in a radically reshaped political map. *AGu* has often been seen as a divisive text, demarcating a clear line between Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian territories, but a closer reading reveals that it has as much to say about integration as division—of Guthrum into the late ninth-century's political community, of his fellow Scandinavians into legal, social and economic structures, and of the formerly independent kingdoms west of the *AGu landgemæra* into a notionally unitary realm under Alfred. Yet the very process of accommodation may in itself have played a part in shaping the identities of these communities. *AGu* also shows the shaping of more specific identities, those of the

two rulers themselves. I have sought to show the ways in which the practical need to establish modes of accommodation between the English and the Scandinavian incomers was exploited politically by both Alfred and Guthrum. By the 880s both kings were ruling over territories in which their authority was new: Alfred in 'English' western Mercia and Guthrum in East Anglia. Both seized the opportunity afforded by the treaty to follow strategies of image-building and legitimation within those territories. That this authority may not have been accepted automatically by their new subjects is hinted at by the treaty's concern to prevent defection from one side to the other (Foot 1996, 45). In its deployment of ideas of Englishness, as much as in its projection of merciful rule, *AGu* was a powerful early statement of Alfredian royal ideology. As a record of Christian law-making it showed Guthrum fostering a political identity of his own. Even as they sought to script accommodation between their own subjects in the treaty they jointly produced, Alfred and Guthrum wrote roles for themselves. Above all *AGu* reveals something of the dynamism, complexity and opportunism that ran through Anglo-Scandinavian interaction in the last quarter of the ninth century.⁴

⁴ I wish to thank Mary Garrison, Charles Insley, David Pratt, Toni Scharer, Alan Thacker, and Patrick Wormald for their careful reading of, and incisive comments on, an earlier draft of this chapter.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASC Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Whitelock, D., with Douglas, D.C. and Tucker, S.I., trans, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 1961, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- Asser Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, in Keynes, S. and Lapidge, M., trans and eds, *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*, 1983, Harmondsworth: Penguin
- B Birch, W. de Gray ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum: a collection of charters relating to Anglo-Saxon history*, 3 vols and index, 1885–93, London: Whiting (vols 1 and 2), Charles J. Clarke (vol. 3), Phillimore (index)
- Cap.Reg. Capitularia Regum Francorum*, MGH, Legum, II, 2 vols, Boretius, A. and Krause, V., eds, 1883–97, Hanover: Hahn
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Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Political Allegiance

MATTHEW INNES

Introduction: Problems of Ethnicity and Identity

In 1002 King Æthelred II (ASC E s.a. 1002) ‘gave orders for all the Danish people who were in England to be slain on St Brice’s Day, because the king had been told that they wished to deprive him of his life by treachery, and all his councillors after him, and then seize his kingdom’. Two years later Æthelred (S909 (K709); EHD no. 127) recalled his decree ‘that all the Danes who had sprung up in this island, sprouting like cockles amongst the wheat, were to be destroyed by a most just extermination’ recounting how the Danish community of Oxford had taken refuge in St Frideswide’s church, which the people of the town had burnt in order to drive them out.

As well as providing a valuable reminder that the Vikings were not the only practitioners of violence, or even violence against churches, in late Anglo-Saxon society, the St Brice’s Day massacre poses an important interpretative problem for the historian about the Scandinavian presence in tenth- and eleventh-century England. Historians have long remained unsure about how to identify Æthelred’s victims (Keynes 1980, 203–5). For Frank Stenton (1971, 380), writing in 1943, ‘within more than a third of England no order of this kind could ever have been carried out’, as the Scandinavian settlements of the late ninth century meant that the inhabitants were ethnically Danish, not English. More recently, Susan Reynolds (1985, 412) has argued that Æthelred was moving only against ‘recent Danes’, that is first-generation immigrants, probably mainly merchants and mercenaries (see also Williams 1986). The twelfth-century historian William of Malmesbury (ASC A s.a. 1001; Stubbs 1887, 207) saw the St Brice’s Day massacre as a response to the betrayal of the mercenary Pallig, who in 1001 had ‘deserted King Æthelred in spite of all the pledges which he had given him, and the king had also made great gifts to him, in estates and gold and silver’, joining a Viking

force in the south-west; according to William, Pallig and his kin were amongst those murdered in 1002. Whilst new incomers were most likely to advertise a distinct ethnic identity from the local population, the 'Danish' community in early eleventh-century Oxford may have consisted also of merchants from 'Danish' areas elsewhere in the English kingdom, as there is strong archaeological evidence for social and economic links between Oxford and the East Midlands (see Blair 1994, 167–70).

The debate over the origins of victims of the St Brice's Day massacre has followed, and largely been determined by, historians' changing understandings of the meaning of Danish identity in tenth- and eleventh-century England. Did the Scandinavian settlements of the late ninth century mean, as Stenton believed, that the majority of the inhabitants of a third of the kingdom of England were ethnically Danish? Did political allegiances follow ethnic identity, so that Scandinavians in English service like Pallig were fifth columnists whose loyalties were always suspect, and so that the inhabitants of those areas which had been settled by earlier Vikings were naturally sympathetic to the new wave of Viking attackers in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries? From the beginnings of modern historical scholarship in the nineteenth century until relatively recently, matters of ethnic identification in early medieval England have been seen as relatively straightforward, determined by biological descent and cultural heritage, and as determining political loyalty (see Trafford, and Evison, this volume). Because of this perception that ethnicity is a 'given' which exists outside of any historical context, debate over Scandinavian settlement has largely turned on issues of numbers: the degree of Danish influence on the social and legal framework of eastern and northern England, and the extent to which the inhabitants of these areas identified themselves as 'Danish', have been seen as automatic and inevitable results of the size of Scandinavian immigration (see Hadley 1997). Despite Peter Sawyer's argument (1971, 148–76) that the Scandinavian impact on late Anglo-Saxon culture and society is explainable as the result of the power of a Viking elite which could exercise disproportionate influence over its subjects, the number of settlers has remained the touchstone issue, in part because revisionists have often presented their arguments for a dramatic downsizing of the scale of Scandinavian settlement as undermining the 'Danishness' of the 'Danelaw' (Reynolds 1985, 309–14; cf. Keynes 1997, 68–9).

Students of the Scandinavian presence in ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-century England have much to learn from recent advances in historical understandings of ethnicity elsewhere in early medieval Europe. Amongst scholars of late and post-Roman continental Europe, there is an important debate on 'ethnogenesis'—the processes by which ethnic identity is shaped (see also Trafford, this volume). In the 1960s and 1970s, German scholars examined common bodies of historical lore (origin myths and tribal histories) and social customs and eventually written law-codes pertinent to particular peoples. Preserved by elites, but also shaped, to an important degree, by rulers, these traditions, it was argued, were the fundamental determinants of ethnic identity in the early Middle Ages, as political communities ruled by (for example) Gothic kings came to adopt Gothic tradition and see themselves as Gothic (Wolfram 1981). Recently, the debate has become both increasingly international and increasingly heated. Some

historians have adopted a post-modern view of ethnicity as something which could be adapted and abandoned according to the prevailing fashion; inevitably, there has also been reaction, with others insisting that ethnic traditions were an essentially continuous heritage (Amory 1993; 1994; 1996; Heather 1996; 1998). Beyond the immediate controversy, it is now clear that ethnic allegiance cannot be seen as a given, something passively inherited from forefathers or reducible to biological descent. Once we move beyond face-to-face groups whose solidarities are based in everyday contact and cooperation—that is, beyond a tribal society—ethnic identities are necessarily cultural and social constructions, transmitted and transmuted over time and space (Pohl 1998a; 1998b).

Once we recognize that social identity is not something fixed for all time, the debate about the Scandinavian presence in tenth- and eleventh-century England takes on a new shape. The entrenched positions of most of the proponents are based on a reductionist view of a direct and proportional correlation between the number of Scandinavian settlers, the scale of the Scandinavian impact, and the spread of a Danish identity. This interpretative framework is to a large extent shared, in spite of the polarization of views on the scale and impact of the settlement; it focuses attention on issues such as the number of Viking settlers, for which the sources are well mined. However, by re-directing our attention towards new lines of inquiry such as the mechanics of settlement and the relationship between the incomers and indigenous social structures, we may find the sources suddenly more forthcoming, conclusions less predictable, and debate more fruitful. Of course, numbers matter—the relative weight of incomers in a host society is one important factor affecting the processes of settlement—but even if the discovery of a clutch of (imaginary) Anglo-Saxon ‘Green Cards’ issued to incoming Vikings allowed the numbers question to be answered with assurance, it would not necessarily help us identify the victims of the St Brice’s Day massacre in 1002, or understand their place in society and the basis of their Danish identity. We are first and foremost dealing with a reshaping of social and political power thanks to the immigration of a military elite: the sensible way forward is to study the restructuring of social and political organization involved in this process, and to discuss the issue of immigration on the level below the elite as a part of that restructuring. The Scandinavian impact on England must have been determined by the interaction between the settlers and the people and institutions they encountered in England, and above all by the power relationships between the new Viking rulers and the societies they conquered (Keynes 1997, 68–9; Hadley 1997; and this volume).

This chapter re-examines the written evidence for the existence of a Danish identity in those regions of England which had been subject to Scandinavian rule and settlement in the late ninth century. The distribution of the written evidence means that this will inevitably involve concentrating on the region’s relationship with the kings of England who ruled it after the mid-tenth century. What emerges are complex series of overlapping identities: regional and regnal, legal and political, local and ethnic. The creation of a new allegiance, to the kingdom of England, went hand in hand with the consolidation of regionalism within that kingdom: English identity complemented rather than replaced older traditions which were re-worked but not forgotten (cf. Innes 1998).

Given the recent emphasis on the development of an English identity as the key to the political success of England's kings in commanding the allegiance of their subjects (Wormald 1994 [1999b, 359–82]; Foot 1996), the resulting picture has important implications for our understanding of the tenth- and eleventh-century English state.

The Rebellion of 1065

The clearest insight into political identities in those areas which had been settled by Scandinavians in the late ninth century comes from the eve of the Norman conquest. In 1065 the Northumbrian elite rebelled against its earl, Tostig, a member of the family of Godwine, the dominant party at the English court, who had been appointed in 1055. One version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, connected with Ealdred, Bishop of Worcester (1046–62) and Archbishop of York (1061–9), gives a vivid account of the politics of the revolt (Cubbin 1996; Wormald 1999a, 130–1). Late in August 1065 (ASC D [E] s.a. 1065):

The thegns of Yorkshire and Northumberland [E: the Northumbrians] united to outlaw Tostig, their earl. They slew all his retainers whom they could catch, whether English or Danish, and seized his stock of weapons in York, his gold and silver and all his treasures which they came to hear of anywhere else. They sent for Morcar, the son of earl Ælfgar, and chose him to be their earl. He marched south with all the men of the shire, together with the men from the shires of Nottingham, Derby and Lincoln, and occupied Northampton, where he was joined by his brother Edwin and men from his earldom, with whom there were many Welshmen. There came earl Harold to meet them, and they charged him with a mission to request that they could have Morcar as their earl. This the king granted, and sent Harold back to them at Northampton, on the eve of the festival of St. Simon and St. Jude [27 October] to announce this same decision to them, giving them pledges, and re-enacted there the laws of Cnut. While he was away on their mission, the northerners did much damage around Northampton: not only did they slay men and burn houses and corn, but they carried off all the livestock they could find, amounting to many thousands. They took many hundreds of captives, and carried them off north with them, so that the shire and the other neighbouring shires were for many years the poorer.

These events of 1065 demonstrate the extent to which regional differences and traditions could be accommodated and acknowledged within the framework of the English state by the middle of the eleventh century (Wormald 1994 [1999b, 359–60, 365–6]; Wilkinson 1939). The grievances of the rebels were clear; Tostig, they claimed, had been rapacious and overbearing in his conduct as earl. Before the Norman conquest, Northumbria had a special position in the English kingdom: it was allowed a large degree of latitude both in internal regulation and administrative intervention, and before Tostig's time was always ruled by an insider who could be trusted to respect its peculiarities (Whitelock 1959; Kapelle 1979). Tostig's unpopularity rested on the fact

that he was an outsider, who introduced novelties which amounted to the harmonization of northern conditions with those prevalent elsewhere (Kapelle 1979, 86–101). In the Chronicle account we can detect the collective voice of the Northumbrian elite, possibly as echoed by their archbishop, uniting in defence of their threatened privileges. The legalistic traditionalism of their case against Tostig, whom they outlaw, rings clear. Indeed, the awareness of a distinct Northumbrian past played an important part in legitimating the revolt: its outbreak coincided with the elevation of the relics of St Oswine, a seventh-century Northumbrian king (cf. Aird 1993, 6–7, arguing unconvincingly against Kapelle 1979, 98).

The label ‘northerners’ which the Chronicle uses in its account of 1065 perhaps reflects this consciousness of a distinct, northern, past.¹ There are certainly parallels for this label elsewhere in the northern version of the Chronicle (ASC D s.a. 1016), which describes the kingdom of Mercia and Northumbria created for Cnut at the peace of Olney in 1016 as *norðdæle*, ‘the northern part’.² Some of the legal compilations associated with Archbishop Wulfstan II of York use a similar vocabulary, for example, the compilation on *norðleoda laga*, ‘the laws of the northern people’ (Wormald 1999a, 391–7).

The subsequent actions of the northern rebels of 1065 are a striking demonstration of the intricate balance between regional and national allegiances within mid-eleventh-century England. In choosing Morcar as Tostig’s replacement, the northerners were deliberately echoing the policies of successive southern kings, who had tried to ensure that Northumbria was integrated into the English kingdom by appointing men with interests in northern Mercia, who were sensitive to local claims, with some local purchase, but who also had political interests further south (Whitelock 1959). So the call was for a return to the customary order of things within the framework of an English kingdom, not a demonstration of northern separatism, and it indicates the success of English kings in courting the allegiance of local elites (Wormald 1994 [1999b, 359–82]). The northerners’ choice of Morcar demonstrated a shrewd appraisal of the realities of political faction at the English court, for Morcar’s family were the prime counterweights to Tostig’s powerful kin, and under Morcar the traditional ruling families of the region returned to power. The rebels called on the king, and on allies at court, as the protectors of their customary position.

The political geography of the rebellion likewise underlines its defence of the traditional differences allowed between the northern parts of the kingdom of England and its heartlands in Wessex. Indeed, there is a geographical code to the progress of the revolt which is revealing. As the rebels marched south, they collected the support of the men of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire, who evidently felt common

¹ It actually reads *ryðernan*, usually seen as an error for *norðernan* by a later scribe (writing at Worcester, hence the unfamiliarity with northern terminology?). See Garmonsway 1954, 193 n. 1, interestingly suggesting Norse influence.

² A reference I owe to Matthew Townend; the other MSS simply refer to Mercia and Northumbria.

cause with their northern neighbours. They then chose to stop before they reached the king's presence. The place where they waited as they made their demands had a special resonance. Northampton stood close by Watling Street, which in the late ninth and early tenth century had been the boundary between English and Danish rulers (see Kershaw, this volume). It also stood outside the political heartland of the kingdom of England, the core area in which kings were normally resident and from which they governed. It is significant that the royal response came from Oxford. Halting at Northampton, the rebels, acting in alliance with the Earl of Mercia, stood their ground and talked with the court across a political marker rich in redolence. Watling Street was not only a physically visible marker, but it was also embedded in the cultural landscape, as a mnemonic for past relationships (Stafford 1985, 135–9).

The actions of the rebels underlined the message of political difference rooted in the past. In the area around Northampton and the neighbouring shires, they plundered and pillaged, slaying and enslaving local inhabitants, burning houses and corn, and seizing livestock. The closest parallels are the acts of punitive force occasionally visited by English kings on recalcitrant provinces, as in 969 (ASC D, E s.a. 969; EHD, no. 4, s.a. 974) when in retribution for a local attack on York merchants, King Edgar ravaged Thanet. In 969 highly visible violence was used to remind the inhabitants of Kent that they were a part of the same kingdom as York; in 1065 the northerners used ravaging to demonstrate a political divide within the kingdom symbolized by Watling Street. These actions need to be placed beside the ready support won by the rebels in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire. It is no accident that it is precisely when describing these activities that the Chronicle labels the rebels 'the northerners', underlining the difference between them and their victims.

Destruction of this kind also had its place in the prosecution of legal claims between two individuals or families in a feud. It may be relevant that Northumbria is the one area of eleventh-century England where there is good evidence for the full-blooded pursuit of feuding; in fact, Northumbrian politics were intimately entwined with a long-running feud between two leading families (Morris 1992). The implicit legal argument involved in the ravaging of the northerners around Northampton is clear from a comparison with the actions taken against Tostig earlier in the revolt—after he had been declared an outlaw, his retainers were rounded up and slaughtered and his goods seized by force. Indeed, as Northamptonshire had been held alongside the Northumbrian earldom by Tostig and his immediate predecessors (Kapelle 1979, 29, 88), the ravaging of the northerners around Northampton could be seen as a continuation of this legitimate recourse to force against the outlaw Tostig's interests. The Chronicle had been at pains to point out that a bloody fate was meted out to Tostig's retainers in York 'whether English or Danish', interestingly implying that on other occasions political violence could be determined by ethnic identity; the ravaging around Northampton must have looked far more like violent confrontation across an ethnic divide.

Northampton was a significant political centre as well as a prospering urban settlement. Throughout the eleventh century, Northampton had been a crucial place in securing control of the East Midlands, and the allegiance of the elite of the region north

and east of Watling Street. In the first decades of the eleventh century, we can trace the lands of the 'chief thegns' of the region, Siferth and Morcar, transmitted by marriage to Edmund Ironside and then Cnut. Under Tostig's predecessor, Siward, Northamptonshire was united with the earldom of Northumbria (Insley forthcoming; Kapelle 1979, 29, 88). This explains Tostig's interests there. Thus, we can detect the shadowy outline of ties of property and kinship underpinning the politics of pre-Conquest England. Political interests were articulated in a language steeped in legal ideas, and using a vocabulary of regional difference. The rebels of 1065 used the ritual of feud to voice a distinct regional identity. This was perhaps a peculiarly northern way of behaving, and is conspicuous here because it took place in a southern context. It both mobilized local support, and proclaimed the essential legality of the case against Tostig.

We should remember that we can only hear the grievances of the northerners because they were to some extent shared by their narrator. This serves as a salutary reminder that our written sources are not disinterested reports, but were themselves part of the political argument they report; we should not attempt to rationalize differences between the various versions in an attempt to create an agreed account, but rather see them as separate voices within the political debate. We may compare the account of 1065 which we have been discussing with the perspective offered in an alternative, southern, version of the Chronicle (ASC C s.a. 1065):

The thegns of Yorkshire met at York, and there slew all the housecarles of Earl Tostig whom they could discover, and seized his treasures. Tostig was then at Britford with the king. Very soon thereafter a great council was held at Northampton, and another at Oxford, on the festival of St Simon and St Jude; and Earl Harold was present and tried to do all he could to bring them to agreement, but was unsuccessful. All of the men of [Tostig's] earldom were unanimous in repudiating him, and outlawed him and all those who with him had promoted injustice, because he had robbed God first, and then despoiled of life and land all those over whom he could tyrannise. They took Morcar as their earl.

This perspective is recognizably centred on king and court. By presenting the process of threat and negotiation as simply the simultaneous holding of two councils at Northampton and Oxford, the rebellion is normalized, and the initiative stripped away from the northerners. Whereas the northern version of the Chronicle details the progress of the rebellion and the demands made by the northerners, allowing us to reconstruct their claims and political identity, here they simply commit an act of violence in Tostig's absence: their claims are not voiced until they are put to the king. Whilst the northern account implicitly voices a political programme resting on a distinctively northern political identity, here we have rebellion against an unjust earl who had offended God's law, no more. This was the political discourse of the court, in which action was played out in the royal presence and defined by the law of God and king.

Law, Ethnicity, and Regionalism in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century England

In 1065 we see the negotiation of the relationship between one particular region and the court. To the rebels, the assertion of a distinctive past legitimated special treatment in the present, and justified the removal of an earl who failed to respect northern custom. Their sense of difference was encapsulated in the law—the key to making peace in 1065 was the giving of pledges and the re-enactment of the laws of Cnut. This was in part a public agreement on a past golden age, in which ruler and aristocracy implicitly affirmed a model of good kingship (Stafford 1981; Wormald 1999a, 129–34). But the laws of Cnut had a specific significance in this northern context, and one which helps us to understand the relationship between law, ethnicity, and regionalism.

Niels Lund has argued that in the second half of the tenth century the royal acknowledgment of the legal differences between ‘Danes’ and ‘English’ was used as a means of cultivating support for the West Saxon kings of England in the newly conquered areas of the East Midlands and Northumbria (Lund 1976; Keynes 1997, 72–3). A decree of King Edgar’s (Liebermann 1903, 206–15; EHD, no. 41, c. 4), addressed to the ealdormen of Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria and probably made in the 970s, began its secular enactments by guaranteeing ‘that secular rights should be in force among the Danes according to such good laws as they best prefer’, in contrast to the measures decided by Edgar and his *witan* and added to earlier royal law among the English, probably recorded in a companion code (Wormald 1999a, 125–26, 317–20, 369–70, 442). As with so much Anglo-Saxon law-making, this decree propagated an imperial image typical of Edgar’s public persona, in this case by emphasising the multi-ethnic nature of Edgar’s realm. But this was not merely courtly pretension. This decree, ‘rhetorical as no previous Anglo-Saxon law had been’ (Wormald 1999a, 318) and admirably suited for oral delivery, was to become a powerful template for the relationship of the region’s elite with the kings of England.

Unlike Edgar’s guarantee, Æthelred legislated directly for those areas following ‘Danish’ law. This was particularly the case in his Wantage Code of 997 (Liebermann 1903, 228–33; EHD, no. 43), which records royal initiative as effected by local agents, and may be closely associated with Sigferth, the first bishop in Lindsey since the Viking invasions of the ninth century. This local knowledge may be reflected in the use of a distinctive legal terminology with strong Scandinavian influences (Wormald 1999a, 327–9; Neff 1989). It records and re-shapes practice in the area known as the Five Boroughs of the East Midlands, and may reflect Æthelred’s attempt to centralize power structures in this area into the hands of two brothers, later referred to as ‘the chief thegns of the Seven Boroughs’, Siferth and Morcar.³ Æthelred’s handling of the region demonstrates a powerful and assertive kingship, characterized by a ruthless use of royal

³ The similarity of personal names between Siferth and Bishop Sigferth, in this context of political proximity, is intriguing.

patronage in the East Midlands and Northumbria which resulted in several leading families being brought down at the hands of the king, including, eventually, that of Siferth and Morcar. It resulted in considerable political unrest in the East Midlands and Northumbria (Stafford 1978; Insley forthcoming; Keynes 1980, 163–232). Given this, it is likely that changing patterns of royal involvement with the East Midlands and Northumbria, evident from the contrast between Edgar's earlier promise of self-determination at law and Æthelred's direct legislation, became a live political issue.

That this was the case, is strongly suggested by the actions of Cnut on his accession to the throne. Significantly, he declared a return to the status quo under Edgar, with an agreement (ASC D s.a. 1018) 'according to the laws of Edgar' reached at Oxford in 1018 between conquerors and conquered (Liebermann 1903, 278; EHD, no. 47). This was a political settlement for the kingdom as a whole through the invocation of the good old law, a fact underlined by the lack of much in the way of concrete debt to Edgar's laws in the legislation associated with the 1018 settlement: the draftsman, Archbishop Wulfstan II, saw Edgar's reign as a Golden Age to be emulated. But in the context of the disturbed conditions of the East Midlands and Northumbria, and the assertion of royal prerogative under Æthelred, the return to the status quo under Edgar had a special significance.⁴ This was a symbolic declaration of the end of royal caprice, and of royal respect for the regional peculiarities of the East Midlands and Northumbria (Wormald 1999a, 129–34).⁵

It was to this tradition that the rebels of 1065 appealed. Their success was acknowledged by Edward the Confessor's confirmation of the laws of Cnut at Oxford, the very place where, almost half a century earlier, Cnut had confirmed the laws of Edgar. For the century between Edgar and Edward the Confessor, royal confirmations of the good old law served to cultivate the support of the leaders of the East Midlands and Northumbria, offering reassurance that their political position was not under threat. In 1065, the Northumbrian elite outlawed an earl who had refused to rule in the traditional manner, and secured royal confirmation of the laws of Cnut as a guarantee against further administrative novelty. Law-making, then, whilst it was clearly an instrument of a powerful royal government, was also a medium for the political bargaining which shaped the relationship between regional elites and the royal court (Wormald 1999a).

The implication of the law-codes—that the elites of the East Midlands and Northumbria needed courting through the acknowledgment of their regional identity which could be expressed in 'ethnic' terms—is born out by the politics of the 1010s. In the reign of Æthelred, and particularly in the course of the conquest of England by Swein

⁴ Of all the different versions of the Chronicle, it is only manuscript 'D' with its northern connections that specifies that the Oxford agreement was made 'according to Edgar's law', suggesting that this detail had a particular significance in this region.

⁵ See the further evidence from Cnut's letter to the English of 1020, and the law-codes promulgated in 1018, first identified by Whitelock (1948), and edited and translated by Kennedy (1982).

and Cnut, this regional agenda emerges from the Chronicle's account of high politics, even if it does so only implicitly: the narrative of the Chronicle does not offer a regional perspective. In 1013 (ASC E s.a. 1013), Swein, after menacing the eastern English coast, sailed up the Trent to Gainsborough (Lincs), where, in the words of the Chronicle, 'Earl Uhtred and all Northumbria straightaway submitted to him, and all the people of Lindsey, and then the people belonging to the Five Boroughs, and soon afterwards all the *here* to the north of Watling Street, and he was given hostages from every shire'. It is striking that Swein's dominance coincided with those areas which had been subject to Scandinavian settlement a century earlier, whose 'Danish' heritage at law Edgar had courted. But to assume that Swein was benefiting from a fifth column who automatically identified themselves with the Viking leader and were anxious to throw off English rule would be mistaken. The events of 1013 need placing in context: they are typical of the politics of this portion of Æthelred's reign, as the continuing political crisis put the interface between court and region under severe strain, and local elites increasingly behaved independently of royal wishes, aiming to save themselves (Stafford 1978). It is easy to point to examples of emphatically 'non-Danish' regions, in the 'English' heartland of Wessex, making very similar agreements to that contracted, at sword point, by the elite of the East Midlands and Northumbria with Swein. Swein's actions were informed by sensible strategy. In geopolitical terms the regions distant from the heartlands of the English monarchy, vulnerable to ravaging along the east coast and riven by political rivalries which might be exploited,⁶ were an obvious base for a would-be conqueror operating across the North Sea; this remained the case throughout the eleventh century. Political calculation, not ethnic identification, underpinned the activities of Swein, and later of Cnut, in the North (see also Hadley 2000).

Nonetheless, the Chronicle's stress on Watling Street as the boundary of the region which submitted to Swein is striking, given the significance of Watling Street as a political and ethnic marker. The choice of vocabulary used to describe those who accepted Swein's rule is intriguing. The highly ambivalent phrase 'all the *here* to the north of Watling Street' cannot be a reference to the Scandinavian force which accompanied Swein; rather, it is a description of Swein's *local* supporters (Smyth 1998b, 36–7). Whilst the author of the Chronicle does not refer to the inhabitants of the region north of Watling Street as 'Danes',⁷ the language it uses is redolent of that used to describe Viking forces throughout the earlier sections, and, significantly, to label the politics which had been established by the Vikings in this region before its absorption into the kingdom of England.⁸

⁶ Notably, the ferocious rivalries between Eadric Streona, ealdorman of Mercia, whose power base lay in western Mercia, and Siferth and Morcar who dominated the East Midlands: Insley (forthcoming).

⁷ Although, most translations render *eall here* as 'all the Danes', as Reynolds (1985, 410–11) points out.

⁸ Other uses of *here* in a similar context come in IV Edgar, which is addressed to ealdorman

The use of Watling Street as a political marker continues through the Chronicle's account (ASC E s.a. 1016) of a later phase in the conflict. It recounts how in 1016 the *atheling* Edmund Ironside entered an alliance with the ealdorman of Northumbria, 'and everybody imagined that they would collect levies to oppose King Cnut [then based at York] but they went into Staffordshire and to Shrewsbury and to Chester and harried on their side, and Cnut on his'. In doing so, Edmund was damaging the power base of the ealdorman of Mercia, Eadric Streona, whose family interests were concentrated in the West Midlands, and who at this stage was allied with Cnut. Cnut, in turn, was attempting to undermine the support that Edmund had won in the Five Boroughs and particularly around Northampton through his marriage into the dominant family in that region, that of Siferth and Morcar, who were Eadric's chief rivals for dominance in Mercia as a whole (Insley forthcoming). But in the Chronicle this straightforwardly political conflict, its patterns determined by patronage networks and local landholding, is articulated with reference to Watling Street as a political marker. In describing Edmund's and Cnut's actions as taking place on their own 'sides' of Watling Street, the Chronicle implies there was a sense in which ravaging on the south (and historically 'English') side of Watling Street was a surprising action for an English ruler campaigning against the Danes, whilst harrying on the north (and historically 'Danish' side) of Watling Street was unexpected from a Danish invader.⁹

If *Realpolitik* determined the shifting allegiances of local elites in the 1010s, the perception that areas of the East Midlands and Northumbria were Danish in legal identity coloured the language of their political allegiance. The Chronicle's narrative of the politics of the 1010s is one individual's account, written as a piece with hindsight as a polemic against Æthelred, and presenting the eventual victory of Cnut as a result of Æthelred's inadequacy; this view is partial and carefully chosen, and without any regional dimension (Keynes 1978). It does not allow us even a guess at what vocabulary Swein or Cnut would have used to appeal for support from the East Midlands or Northumbria, but since the time of Edgar, English kings had courted such men by acknowledging their Danishness at law. It is therefore intriguing that the only surviving royal charter (S931; K1308; see Keynes 1980, 124–5) in which Æthelred acknowledges the separate political identity of the Northumbrians comes from 1013, in which he dropped his usual style of 'King of the English' or some more imperial sounding variant, instead reviving a mid-tenth-century style and presenting himself as ruling a realm consisting of Anglo-Saxons, Northumbrians, pagans, and Britons. It is a grant of land in Northamptonshire to a thegn named Northman. The witness list indicates that this document must predate the submission of 'all the *here* to the North of Watling

Oslac and all the *here* of Northumbria, and the Peterborough evidence discussed p. 81.

⁹ Compare Swein's actions in 1013 (ASC E s.a. 1013) when, following the submission of the region to the north of Watling Street, his army 'crossed Watling Street, and did the greatest damage that any army could do'.

Street' to Swein in the summer.¹⁰ If the grant to Northman comes from a similar context to two newly discovered Barking charters, it is all the more striking that these charters use normal royal styles in transactions dealing with land in 'English' England, in contrast to the Northman grant of 'Danelaw' land. This suggests that the unusual royal style used in the latter document was used consciously, and for a purpose. Here, then, we see Æthelred attempting to rally local support in a formerly 'Danish' area not only through practical patronage, but also by admitting the region's distinct heritage in his public style, before an audience who were only too aware of that heritage and its 'Danish' elements as is suggested by Northman's name. Given the political instability in Northumbria and the East Midlands created by Æthelred's earlier interventionism and the continuing activity of Swein, it seems clear that in the 1010s regional grievances came to be expressed in terms of distinct regional identities. This was not an automatic mechanism of ethnic allegiance, but a means of identification which could be deployed to legitimate actions determined by the political calculations of faction and interest (Stafford 1985, 124–5).

It is not an accident that it is in this period, in a series of law-codes associated with Archbishop Wulfstan II of York (one of the key players in the convoluted politics of northern England), that the 'Danishness' of eastern and northern England first finds consistent expression. It was Wulfstan who coined the term *Dena lagu*, usually translated 'Danelaw', but literally 'the law of the Danes', in contrasting practices in eastern and northern England with the 'English law' of the West Saxon heartlands (Whitelock 1941, 8, 19). It is significant that Wulfstan, like some of his contemporaries, saw these regional differences in legal practice in ethnic terms. Wulfstan used the term *Dena lagu* in a law-code (Liebermann 1903, 236–46; EHD, no. 44) drafted for Æthelred in 1008, and, probably slightly earlier, in a tract concerned with the rights of the Church in eastern and northern England.¹¹ However, the comparison between 'Danish' and 'English' law was only systematically adopted in his legislation for Cnut, above all to contrast regional practices in royal prerogatives and legal procedures in the secular code of 1020 (Liebermann 1903, 278–371; EHD, no. 50; Wormald 1999a, 327–9, 369–70).¹² There is no other pre-Conquest evidence for the diffusion of the term 'Danelaw', so loved by modern historians, and it may be that it was popularized by twelfth-century

¹⁰ Uhtred, ealdorman of Northumbria, the leading figure who submitted to Swein, subscribed it as a witness, with Archbishop Wulfstan II of York, the ealdormen of Mercia Eadric Streona, and the dominant local figures Siferth and Morcar (Keynes 1980, 266). It is probably to be dated to an important assembly in April. This is suggested by comparison with two newly discovered Barking charters, S931a and b, which Professor Keynes kindly pointed out to me; the overlap in witness lists perhaps suggests a similar context of redaction.

¹¹ This is known as 'The Peace of Edward and Guthrum' but thanks to Whitelock, it is identifiable as a forgery of Wulfstan's (Whitelock 1941; Wormald 1999a, 389–91).

¹² Wormald argues that IV Edgar and III Æthelred both had companion codes covering 'English' England, which would place II Cnut in a longer tradition of implicit legal dualism.

legal commentators interested in differences in regional custom, who found the term in Wulfstan's law-codes and used it in a new way, as a territorial label. When modern scholars use the 'Danelaw' as a blanket term, referring to the areas of England which had been subject to Scandinavian settlement as if they were a homogeneous and recognized unit, they are taking Wulfstan's usage out of context: it is vital to remember that the 'Danelaw' of the textbooks is a term of art, not a consistently used contemporary label.

Wulfstan's legislation clearly follows a tradition established by Edgar, of recognizing the distinct legal traditions of the elites of eastern and northern England, and of describing these traditions as in some sense 'Danish'.¹³ In the context of the troubled politics of the last decades of Æthelred's reign, and of the establishment of a new Danish regime under Cnut, such an appeal was particularly apposite, and the ethnic element of regional difference all the more noticeable. The advent of a new Viking threat in the 990s and 1000s, and the eventual conquest of England by Danish kings, led to a sharpening of perceptions of difference between 'English' and 'Dane', notably by Wulfstan himself in his 'Sermon of the Wolf' to the English (EHD, no. 240), written on the eve of Danish conquest. In such a context, what had previously been blurred and hazy distinctions, increasingly dormant in political terms, were dramatically re-activated. With the ultimate triumph of Cnut, and the advent of a Danish king and court, and the addition of a significant number of Danes to the political and social elite, the issue of Anglo-Danish relations remained a live one (Williams 1986).

Wulfstan thus sought to present Cnut's regime as a partnership between Danes and English, and the model of legal duality was a powerful one for such cooperation. The prologue to the agreement (EHD, no. 47; Whitelock 1948, 440) reached at Oxford in 1018 stated this explicitly: 'This is the ordinance which the councillors determined and devised according to many good precedents; and that took place as soon as King Cnut with the advice of his councillors completely established peace and friendship between the Danes and English'. This was based on a forged historical template: 'The Laws of Edward and Guthrum' (Liebermann 1903, 128–35), in which Wulfstan had sought to base the rights of the northern church on a fictitious treaty between English kings and Viking settlers, 'when the English and the Danes unreservedly entered into relationships of peace and friendship' (Whitelock 1941, 13; see also Kershaw, this volume). Wulfstan's legislation presented stability within the kingdom as based on peace and friendship between English and Dane, a symbiosis rooted in the law. Wulfstan emerges as a late Anglo-Saxon version of Cassiodorus, the Roman senator who presented Theodoric's Ostrogothic regime in post-Roman Italy in terms of ethnic partnership (Amory 1993; 1996).

¹³ Not only did Wulfstan admire Edgar's reign, the only surviving manuscript of IV Edgar is linked to Worcester, a see held by Wulfstan even after he was made Archbishop of York.

*Scandinavian and West Saxon
Conquerors in the Making of Danish Identity*

The return of the Vikings under Swein, and the eventual conquest of England by Cnut, may explain much in Wulfstan's legislation, but Wulfstan did not conjure Danish identity in a black hole of discourse; rather, Wulfstan was urging the consummation of a long and steady courtship between English kings and regional elites, which went back at least as far as Edgar. The cultivation of regional identities through law-codes only makes sense if it reverberated amongst the elites of eastern and northern England. It is difficult to trace the roots of this inherited 'Danish' identity.¹⁴ Nonetheless, it is possible to piece together just enough to sketch the basic structures of political organization and ethnic identification.

Given the nature of the Viking armies which settled in England in the 870s, and a century or more of interaction (and in all likelihood intermarriage), it is difficult to see Danish identity in the tenth century as a simple acknowledgment of Scandinavian ancestry by second, third or fourth generation descendants. The war-bands which carved up eastern and northern England were heterogeneous and often fissiparous groups of individuals of diverse origin held together by inter-personal bonds, whose group identity must have been created by common experience on the war-trail. Indeed, the ethnonym 'Danish' was essentially an English label for heterogeneous groups of opponents (Smyth 1998b, 31–9). The emergence of a 'Danish' ethnicity in the areas of England subject to Scandinavian settlement must therefore have been a process which took place after the initial land-sharing amongst the new rulers (cf. Hastrup 1991b). In the context of the settlement of Scandinavian war-bands in eastern and northern England and their impact on the social structures they encountered, the development of a Danish ethnicity was a means of defining the relationship between new settlers and the native population (cf. Pohl 1998a; 1998b).

There is very little evidence that allows us to examine how the new regimes established by Scandinavian warlords were defined. Our written sources usually use traditional political labels based on pre-Viking political geography to identify the inhabitants of eastern and northern England, and the forces commanded by Scandinavian rulers in eastern and northern England are usually named after regnal or local units, as the army (*here*) of a particular kingdom, or of a particular place (e.g. ASC A s.a. 901, 904, 905; D s.a. 905; cf. Reynolds 1985, 408). In contrast, the surviving sources can supply insight into the processes of Scandinavian settlement. The initial acts of conquest in East Anglia, Northumbria, and Mercia were distinct from the actual Viking takeover. After overwhelming victories in Northumbria in 867 and Mercia in 874, Viking armies set up indigenous royals, and Viking aims centred on the continued taking of plunder and tribute. It was only in 876–880 that a new strategy of political domination was

¹⁴ This is largely because of the provenance of the written evidence: we are more or less reliant on the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which gives us the perspective from the West Saxon court.

adopted, with first southern Northumbria, then eastern Mercia, and, finally, East Anglia ‘shared out’ (ASC A s.a. 867, 874, 876, 877, 880; Stafford 1985, 115); this initial settlement was then ‘topped up’ by the remnants of subsequent Scandinavian war-bands as they ran out of steam.¹⁵ There is no direct evidence for the mechanisms of political takeover, but the numismatic evidence, which unlike the written sources emanated from the Viking rulers themselves rather than their West Saxon opponents, suggests some element of contact with the regnal traditions of the conquered areas: by c. 890 the new rulers of East Anglia were minting a coinage commemorating St Edmund (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 319–20), the last indigenous king, and a victim of the Vikings. Given the polycentric nature of the Viking armies of the ninth century—the force which wintered at Cambridge in 874, for example, was led by three kings (ASC A s.a. 875)—such a process must have involved a significant degree of political centralization and caused social stress (Richards, Jecock, Richmond, and Tuck 1995; Halsall, and Hadley, this volume). The kings of Wessex, by making treaties with Viking leaders such as Guthrum, and expecting them to be able to bring their followers to book, may have played a significant role in the transformation of Viking political organization. The Chronicle (ASC A s.a. 890) styles Guthrum simply as ‘the northern king’, imputing some kind of loose overlordship over the region beyond Watling Street, but significantly one given a regional, not an ethnic, label (it adds that ‘he dwelt in East Anglia and was the first to take possession of that country’; the prologue to the treaty of Alfred and Guthrum (Liebermann 1903, 126–9; EHD, no. 34) styles Guthrum as king of ‘all the people which is in East Anglia’).

One northern source, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (EHD, no. 6)—which survives in an eleventh-century manuscript, although sections were written in the tenth century—hints at this process of negotiation with extant institutions in Northumbria: it recounts the story of the appearance of St Cuthbert to the Abbot of Carlisle, who was told to seek out Guthfrith, son of Harthacnut, have his freedom redeemed, and then ‘lead him with the whole army to the hill which is called ‘Oswiu’s down’, and there place on his right arm a gold armlet, and thus they all may acknowledge him as king’ (Wormald 1994 [1999b], 363–4, n.13). Whilst the story must to be taken with a sizeable pinch of salt, the use of Northumbrian regnal tradition (Oswiu was a famed and sainted seventh-century king) is striking. Certainly by the 890s, Viking rulers at York seem to have been working closely with the Church; for example, Guthfrith was buried in the ‘high church at York’ in 895 (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 320–3; Campbell 1962, 51; Rollason 1998, 63–73; Smyth 1987). Viking rulers in the North seem to have based their position on allegiance to a Northumbrian kingdom at York, not on ethnic

¹⁵ This phenomenon, normally ignored, is surely of vital importance, as Searle (1988) argues for Normandy. It also adds further weight to the case made by Lund (1981) for minimizing the need for a secondary migration of peasant settlers; nor should we forget peaceful immigration by traders and others in the tenth and eleventh centuries as a factor in the development of a ‘Danish’ identity within England.

loyalties.¹⁶ Even after they had conquered Northumbria, West Saxon kings in their royal charters could acknowledge the existence of a 'Northumbrian' ethnicity distinct from that of the 'English'. A series of mid-tenth-century charters, most issued for northern beneficiaries or in the presence of northerners, often in a political context in which West Saxon control of Northumbria was particularly precarious, do not use the normal style 'King of the English', 'Emperor of Britain', or some variant, but rather refer in alliterative Latin, to a 'quadripartite' kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons, Northumbrians, pagans, and Britons (Keynes 1997, 70–3).¹⁷ Certainly a significant proportion of the lay elite of kingdom identified themselves with 'Viking' traditions: hence the dissemination, in the second quarter of the tenth century, of skaldic verse and coin designs which promoted an avowedly consciously Viking royal image, and the inclusion of 'pagans' alongside 'Northumbrians' in the titulature of these royal charters (Hines 1995; Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 322–5). Here, as in Normandy, the continuing arrival of new generations of Scandinavians was vital in forcing the continued development of an explicitly Viking element in political identity (cf. Searle 1988). Whilst the polity as a whole remained Northumbrian, Northumbrian identity was now seen as encompassing a Scandinavian, as well as an English, heritage.

The Chronicle accounts of political organization in East Anglia and the East Midlands in the first decades of the tenth century, as the West Saxon conquest got underway, suggest a more decentralized situation than was the case in Northumbria. This perhaps reflected different conditions at the time of Scandinavian settlement. In 894 Alfred of Wessex sent ambassadors to York urging the Viking ruler there to bring the Scandinavian army in the East Midlands under control, suggesting the lack of a strong regnal tradition in the region (Campbell 1962, 51). The death of Guthrum in 890, who, although based in East Anglia, was seen by the West Saxons as exercising some form of overlordship over the Scandinavian polities to the north, is likely to have left a political vacuum. Increasing pressure from the kings of Wessex may also have encouraged the development of a highly localized form of political obligation (Stafford, 1985, 112–14). There may even have been a conscious decision to adopt a decentralized mode of political organization, reflecting the decentralized and polycentric nature of the Viking war-bands, and possibly rivalries between different leaders and their followers within them (cf. Searle 1988).

The very full accounts of the Chronicle for the conquest of East Anglia and the East Midlands in the first half of the tenth century describe a society organized around a

¹⁶ Various redactions of the Chronicle use terms such as 'the people of York', 'all the inhabitants of Northumbria, both English and Danish, Norwegian and others', 'all the councillors of the Northumbria', and simply 'the Northumbrians' in referring to the subjects of Viking kings of York (ASC C s.a. 918; A s.a. 924 *recte* 923; D s.a. 947, 948, 954).

¹⁷ Kelly n.d.; S392 (dated 939), S520 (946), S548, S549, S550 (all 949), S569 (955), S572 (956), S633 (956), S677 (958), S766 (968); forthcoming work by Marios Costambeys promises to further illuminate the politics of the kingdom of York.

series of fortified boroughs, which were the focal points for their rural hinterlands. Each borough had its own war-band, and the Chronicle distinguishes each *here* in terms of its home borough—even in the late tenth-century, legal transactions (S1448 (B1128)) took place ‘in the meeting of the whole army (*ealles heres gemote*) at Northampton’. A similar unit was based on Cambridge, whose *here* was led, in the early tenth century, by Earl Sihtric.¹⁸ Perhaps political units such as that headed by Sihtric originated in the settlement of the various constituent war-bands out of the great Viking armies of the late ninth century. The casualty lists given from time to time in the Chronicle (ASC D s.a. 905; A s.a. 921 *recte* 920) imply the existence of a system of social rank, listing kings, earls, and holds; this presumably related to political organization, as individual war-bands were bound together under a particular leader and tied to a particular centre. Any cooperation between these units at a higher political level seems to have been largely voluntary (cf. Searle 1988).¹⁹

East Anglia and the East Midlands were conquered in the first decades of the tenth century by the West Saxon kings of England. The Chronicle describes this conquest as taking place through the submission, one by one, of the various local *heras*, again indicating the decentralization of political organization; at the point of submission, the essentially inter-personal bonds which held the *heras* together are particularly evident. However these units extracted goods from the land, in the 900s and 910s they remained very much active as war-bands, seeking plunder through warfare and capable of allying with groups of unsettled Vikings (cf. Halsall, and Stocker, this volume). In 917 (ASC A s.a. 918 *recte* 917), Earl Thurcytel submitted, along with ‘all the earls, and the chief men who owed allegiance to Bedford, besides many who owed allegiance to Northampton’, and then in 919 (ASC A s.a. 920 *recte* 919) he ‘went overseas to France with men who wished to follow him, under the protection of King Edward and with his assistance’. What the Chronicle suggests, then, is that existing local units served as the basis for the political organization of the Scandinavian settlers (cf. Sidebottom, and Stocker, this volume). The shires into which the East Midlands was organized under the kings of England may have owed much to these earlier units.

Within these local units, ethnic allegiance was initially at least defined by social function. The members of a weapon-carrying elite which plundered and campaigned were Danish: the Treaty (EHD, no. 34, c. 5) between Alfred and Guthrum stipulated that ‘no slaves nor freemen might go without permission into the *here*, any more than any of theirs to us’. In 912 (ASC A s.a. 913 *recte* 912) the Chronicle could record the

¹⁸ Sihtric’s seat at Shelford, three miles south of Cambridge, was the site of contemporary minting activity and possibly an earthwork; close by is the iron-age hill fort at Wandlebury, where shire meetings were held in the later tenth century, and a church whose importance in the later tenth and eleventh centuries is demonstrated by its rich sculptural tradition (Hart 1992, 11).

¹⁹ Stafford (1985, 139), suggests that the ‘confederation’ of the Five Boroughs of the East Midlands dates from the mid-tenth century, as a defensive measure, probably organized by the kings of England.

submission of ‘a good number of those people who had been under the rule of Danish men’, whilst Æthelstan on one occasion early in his reign acknowledged the ‘Danish’ identity of local elites, styling himself ‘King of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes’ (cf. Smyth 1998b, 33; Keynes 1997, 69). By the middle of the tenth century, commentators could make a distinction between these ‘Danish’ local elites and new waves of Viking invaders. The social significance of membership of the *here* is echoed in late tenth- and early eleventh-century sources from the region.²⁰

Some light is shed on the development of this Danish identity by a twelfth-century account of the holdings of the monks of Ely which preserves a Latin translation of a lost late tenth-century Old English source (Blake 1962, 98–9; trans. Keynes and Kennedy) recording the history of certain estates. It includes a fascinating account of the history of land at Bluntisham (Hunts), which was acquired by Bishop Æthelwold in the reign of King Edgar. After Edgar’s death, sons of a man called Boga of Hemingford laid claim to that land at Bluntisham, saying that their uncle, called Tope, ought to have the land by right of inheritance:

This was on the ground that Tope’s grandmother, being in the flower of her womanhood, crossed from Bluntisham and submitted to King Edward [the Elder] at Cambridge at the time when Earl Toli held Huntingdonshire against the king by force. It was on this basis that it was argued she should by right have the land. The councillors and old men of that district, who well remembered the time when Earl Toli was killed at the River Thames, pronounced the whole matter spurious. They said also that King Edward had conquered Huntingdonshire and brought it under control before he took Cambridgeshire

The elders rejected the claim, and their political memory was correct over half a century after the events they debated: Edward the Elder did take Huntingdonshire before Cambridgeshire (ASC A s.a. 921 *recte* 920), and so the case of the sons of Boga was bogus. The legal memory of the elders of Huntingdonshire confirms the Chronicle’s picture of the political organization of the region in the early tenth century, as centred around military confederations tied to particular boroughs and their hinterlands, and led by individual earls, with Danish identity tied to membership of a *here*. There is no hint of distinct ethnic communities each jealously guarding their own laws; rather, here we have a family which clearly maintained a Danish ethnic identity, interleaved with their English counterparts, and settling legal disputes by local testimony in a common forum. Although the account of Bluntisham does not explicitly state the Danish legal identity of Boga and his family, it can safely be assumed, and the Ely material does refer to

²⁰ An Old English poem (ASC A s.a. 942) recounting the events of 939–941, when Olaf Guthfrithson attempted to re-establish northern hegemony over the East Midlands as far as Watling Street, differentiated between the Christianized and fully integrated descendants of Scandinavian settlers in the East Midlands and their new, pagan Norse rulers: ‘the Danes were previously subjected by force under the Norsemen, for a long time in bonds of subjection to the heathens’ (Smyth 1998b, 33).

other individuals as 'Danes'. Danish ethnicity was tied to rights over land, which originated in the period of Scandinavian rule; for his claims to be valid, Boga needed to assert that his ancestors had submitted voluntarily to the English king and had his property rights acknowledged as a result, rather than being defeated in battle. That is, the construction of the property rights of some influential groups in this society was tied to the process of English takeover, and the actions of the followers of local Scandinavian warlords when faced with the English kings. Claiming such rights involved rehearsing a family history which connected the present to the Scandinavian past, and thus articulating a Danish identity. In Boga's family at least, the assertion of rights over land through the commemoration of a particular aspect of the family past also went hand in hand with a 'Scandinavian' naming strategy (cf. Amory 1994).

There is one other fragment of legal evidence, from late tenth-century Essex, which allows us to glimpse the interaction between this Danish identity, rooted in the law and land of a local elite, and the public sphere of political discourse. At some point between 995 and 999 a series of three Old English documents (S939 (K704); EHD, no. 121; Whitelock 1930, no. 16:2) was issued confirming the will of the Essex thegn, Æthelric of Bocking: one, the surviving copy, was given to Christ Church, Canterbury, the principal beneficiary of the will; the other two, now lost, were to be preserved with the royal relic collection and by Æthelric's widow. Æthelric's will had been contested because he had been accused, before his death, of having been involved 'in the treacherous plan that Swein should be received in Essex when he first came there with a fleet'; after Æthelric's death 'this terrible accusation' was revived as control of Æthelric's legacy was contested, but Christ Church, Canterbury, was able to use its political clout to have Æthelric declared posthumously innocent. A declaration was 'written and read before the king and his council' in an assembly at Cookham in Berkshire. The accusation of an Essex plot to receive Swein is itself intriguing, although too little is known about it to draw firm conclusions about any putative link between the 'treacherous plan' and the memory that Essex had been subject to Danish settlement (cf. Lund 1976). It is surely no accident that the document declaring Æthelric's innocence and confirming his will is one of the few surviving charters, royal or private, which explicitly acknowledges the Danish identity of Æthelric's neighbours (Keynes 1997, 73); it was enacted before a series of influential named witnesses 'and all the thegns who gathered [. . .] from far and wide, both West Saxons and Mercians, Danes and English'. In the context of recurrent invasion by Danish kings and suspect loyalties to the English crown, a Danish ethnicity which was tied up with the legal position and property rights of a section of the local elite could become politically 'live': it might not determine political allegiances, but it became a real factor in how people thought and talked about politics, a potential rallying-cry.

Ethnicity, Regionalism, and the Making of England

Ethnic and regional identities in eastern and northern England underwent dramatic changes between the late ninth and the mid-eleventh centuries. This process invites a number of comparisons from elsewhere in early medieval Europe, most notably with

the settlement of barbarian armies and the establishment of barbarian kingdoms within the western Roman Empire. Initially, legal, social, and religious barriers between the incomers and subject populations might lead to ethnic division, which allowed the vertical integration of an often heterogeneous group of incomers as a military and/or political elite. Such a situation served both to regulate the interaction between conquerors and conquered, and to consolidate the conquering elite, which came to see itself as a homogenous group. This is precisely what we see in England, with the development of a 'Danish' identity uniting the settlers and articulating their local dominance. In post-Roman Europe, once initial barriers between conquerors and conquered had broken down, and the military elite of the newcomers had institutionalized their local power and abandoned the search for tribute and plunder, new polities based on the ethnic identity of the conquerors were formed, as over a number of generations, subject populations took on the identity of their rulers; ethnicity thus became a principle of horizontal rather than vertical integration. In Scandinavian England, however, the conquest of the areas of Scandinavian settlement by the kings of England in the first half of the tenth century complicated this process, as did the divergent histories of Northumbria, with its relatively centralized kingship and its constant influx of 'new' Vikings, and East Anglia and the East Midlands, where small-scale regional units based on the personal obligation of 'Danes' towards their local *here* were easily and quickly swallowed up into the English kingdom.

In Northumbria, we see the development of a distinctive Northumbrian political identity with a strong Scandinavian element, which, although it did not sustain separatist ambitions after the middle of the tenth century, was not wholly subordinated to English identity before the Conquest; as in Normandy, continuing Viking immigration, combined with intense political pressure from neighbours, crystallized a new political identity, although one which had to be adjusted to new exigencies with the eventual conquest by the English. In East Anglia and the East Midlands, political negotiation between local elites and the English crown over the limits of central ambition and local custom was conducted in a language which saw local prerogatives as shaped by a 'Danish' heritage. The return of the Danes under Swein, and the eventual establishment of a Danish dynasty on the English throne under Cnut, played an important role in confirming the existence of a regional identity which was rooted in land and law but which was expressed in terms of 'Danishness'.

In eighth- and ninth-century Europe, law had become a central element in ethnic identification (Pohl 1998a, 11; Amory 1993). Just as Merovingian kings issued law-codes for peripheral principalities and Carolingian emperors fixed the customs of newly conquered peoples in writing, so the kings of England related law, ethnicity, and regionalism in their handling of the area north and east of Watling Street. In the Frankish case, these practices can be seen as part of a wider attempt to fix a political geography, stabilizing regional units and territorializing ethnic differences. So, too, by canalizing the Danish heritage of these peripheral regions as a matter of legal difference, English kings sought to tame it, as they were the guarantors of *Dena lagu*, they cultivated local elites by giving regionalism a safe outlet which they could address and

acknowledge. Nurturing a Danish identity rooted in land and law, successive English kings first legitimated and then, in Wulfstan's legislation, slowly began to territorialize the Danish identity of the area which came, by the twelfth century, to be known as the 'Danelaw'.

This Danish identity is all but invisible in the written accounts of the politics of late Anglo-Saxon England (Reynolds 1985, 409–14). The written sources are, of course, products of the court elite, and in their political discourse it was God and king who held centre stage. But there were points where even this discourse had to admit the reality of regionalism (as in the account of the end of Æthelred's reign) or where regional voices intruded (as in the northern account of the 1065 rebellion). It was only in these most exceptional circumstances that 'Danishness' intruded into the domain of high politics; typically, it remained politically inert, rooted in local right (cf. Heather 1998). In the normal run of things, local elites defined their allegiance in terms of the administrative units through which they related to the King of England, and acted accordingly. Shires formed the basic unit of collective political action. Even Cnut maintained the traditional political geography, initially dividing the kingdom into Wessex, East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria, and thereafter maintaining the centrality of shires ruled through royal officials (Keynes 1994).

The kings of England handled the provinces north of Watling Street with the greatest of care. In Northumbria, this involved the tying of secular and ecclesiastical elites to the wider, English, polity (Whitelock 1959). Royal policy in East Anglia and the East Midlands was more interventionist. The shires through which they administered the region may have been based on pre-existing units, but they were resolutely local, and could not be defined with reference to a Danish identity; likewise larger political units such as the earldoms of Mercia or East Anglia could not sustain a Danish identity.²¹ For the kings of the newly created kingdom of England, the development of a Danish political identity, or the expression of regional identity in explicitly ethnic terms, was too dangerous a possibility to entertain. Even as they had their 'Danish' rights recognized and their 'Danish' identity consolidated, local elites north of Watling Street were being bound into the kingdom of the English.²²

²¹ The Five Boroughs, the one larger unit which could, had only a short and troubled life under Æthelred as an active administrative unit, and perhaps constituted an object lesson for later kings.

²² An earlier version of this paper was given in the course of a Socrates study visit at York in May 1999. I should like to thank my audience on that occasion for their discussion; Dawn Hadley and Julian Richards for their encouragement, patience, and editorial skill; Alice Cowan, Charles Insley, and Matthew Townend for their comments and help; and Simon Keynes for advice on charters, and permission to quote the Keynes-Kennedy translation of the *Libellus Æthelwoldi*. All errors and idiosyncrasies remain, of course, my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASC Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Whitelock, D., with Douglas, D.C. and Tucker, S.I., trans, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 1961, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode; and in Garmondsway, G., trans, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 1954, London: Everyman.
- EHD *English Historical Documents I*, c. 500–1042, Whitelock, D. trans. and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- K Kemble, J.M., ed., *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols, 1839–48, London: English Historical Society
- S Sawyer, P. H. ed., *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated list and bibliography*, 1968, London: Royal Historical Society

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Viking Age England as a Bilingual Society

MATTHEW TOWNEND

Questions and Methodology

Linguistic and onomastic evidence remains central to any discussion of the Scandinavian settlements in England, and of the contact and interaction between natives and newcomers. In many ways, though, this evidence has still not been deployed as fully as it might, and one may be forgiven for feeling at times as if students of the Danelaw are essentially divided into two parties: those who believe in linguistic evidence, and those who do not. The apparent failure—or unwillingness—of the latter party to appreciate such evidence has, perhaps understandably, led to a certain defensiveness in the philological camp, as well as a possible despondency about genuinely interdisciplinary progress. In this chapter I shall be restating some of the well-worn tenets which, in the study of linguistic influence, remain fundamental—if at times neglected. However, while I shall in the process be reassessing the use of linguistic evidence for extralinguistic ends, my purpose is primarily to reconsider aspects of Anglo-Norse language contact in Viking Age England. Hence I shall be focusing on questions such as the status of Old English and Old Norse as discrete languages in the Danelaw, and the nature of the linguistic contact between speakers of Norse and speakers of English.¹ Above all, I shall be presenting Viking Age England as a bilingual

¹ Two points of terminology should be noted here. Firstly, by ‘Old Norse’ I mean the variety of language spoken by Scandinavians in the Viking Age: the term does not relate specifically to Norwegians, and other writers on the subject sometimes designate the same language as ‘Old Scandinavian’ or ‘Viking Age Norse’. Secondly, by ‘speech community’ I mean all those speaking a particular variety of language: the term does not bring with it any assumption that

society in which two vernacular languages were spoken, and two speech communities were in close and persistent contact. However, it should be pointed out that by ‘bilingual society’ is meant a society in which two different languages are spoken, and not necessarily a society made up of bilingual speakers (Appel and Muysken 1987, 1). Indeed, I would myself subscribe to the common view that speakers of Norse and English were adequately intelligible to one another when each spoke their own language:² Viking Age England would thus be a bilingual society dominantly made up of monolingual speakers of two different languages.

In many ways these issues are old and familiar ones, but attempts to address them have not always been as clear-minded as they might be with regard to the nature of linguistic evidence and the methodologies of linguistic study. In particular, I would argue that it is crucial to maintain a broadly sociolinguistic perspective on the phenomena of language contact and language change. Put simply, one must not fall into the error, however unconscious, of considering languages as if they existed apart from their users. As Angus McIntosh (1994, 137) has recently said, ‘Fundamentally, what we mean by “languages in contact” is “users of language in contact” and to insist upon this is much more than a mere terminological quibble and has far from trivial consequences’.

A brief reminder of linguistic scholarship is relevant at this point, and one may say that the results of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century philology, in the monumental form of grammars and dictionaries, have without question retained their value. The linguistic records which the neogrammarian workers assembled—the sound-changes, grammars, and vocabularies which they compiled and catalogued—remain foundational, phenomenally impressive, and, in the overwhelming majority of their details, quite simply correct. But while the observational and analytical powers of the great philologists were of course prodigious, it is fair to say that in many ways they failed to appreciate fully the complexity of the mechanisms of linguistic change; and to a large degree they neglected the social dimension of language when studying early periods. Regarded traditionally as stemming from William Labov’s (1966; 1972) work in New York in the 1960s, the discipline known as sociolinguistics has substantially met both of these needs (for a summary of Labov’s 1960s research see Bynon 1977, 198–215). Linguistic observation reveals that all dialects and languages, even supposedly ‘standard’ ones, embrace a great quantity of variation in phonology, grammar, and vocabulary; and this variability is especially apparent in the spoken language. Synchronic sociolinguistics is essentially concerned with the relationship between

speech communities correlate with other types of social community, although of course this may well be the case (see Weinreich 1953, 89–99). For discussion of the term ‘speech community’ see Hudson 1996, 24–30.

² This and other issues are discussed at length in Townend 1995 (published version forthcoming).

linguistic variation and extralinguistic variables such as sex, age, and position in social networks (as well as speech style and contextualization), while historical sociolinguistics attempts to relate these variables to linguistic change. Furthermore, the so-called 'uniformitarian principle', stated crudely, holds that observable features of contemporary linguistic change in progress are likely to have been operative in previous periods as well, and hence they enable us to better understand the movements and mechanisms of past linguistic change, and in particular the significance of spoken variability in such change (Labov 1994, 9–27).

There is, therefore, an inherent connection between a sociolinguistic analysis of language change and an interest in 'users of language in contact', and one may point to invaluable work by scholars such as Uriel Weinreich (1953), Peter Trudgill (1983; 1986), James Milroy (1992), and Sarah Grey Thomason and Terrence Kaufman (1988), as well of course as William Labov himself. Exemplary application of such approaches in English historical linguistics can be found in the work of the Edinburgh-Glasgow school of Angus McIntosh, M.L. Samuels, and Jeremy Smith (see for example Samuels 1972; Smith 1988; 1996; and Laing 1989). It remains true, of course, that many features of linguistic usage are not directly observable for historical linguistics, as the extant 'database' is limited and uncontrollable, and the tape-recording of a spoken corpus is obviously impossible (Milroy 1992, 45–7); nonetheless, attempts to reconstruct linguistic history from the material that is available must still be governed by the same sociolinguistic principles.

However, one might argue that in the late 1970s and 1980s the study of Anglo-Norse language contact suffered not so much from a lack of theoretical awareness as rather an excess of it. It was perhaps inevitable that the linguistic vogue for pidgins and creoles should impinge on the historical study of English, since two of the great landmarks in its evolution are the Norse and Norman invasions. A pidgin is a simplified contact language that arises when mutually unintelligible speech communities attempt to establish pragmatic communication (for example in trade situations); and a pidgin becomes a creole when it becomes a first language (usually of the children of pidgin speakers; see for example Romaine 1988). The terms of the claim for English were that pidginization occurred through the Anglo-Norse contact situation (or the Anglo-Norman one, depending on one's preference), and that early Middle English, with its conspicuous loss of inflexions, marks a creole development from this (see for example Domingue 1977; Fisiak 1977; and Poussa 1982). Manfred Görlach (1986) firmly put a stop to such speculations, however, by pointing out that on these terms the criteria by which languages are judged to be creoles (namely, some loanwords and some degree of inflexional loss) are so wide as to permit most languages in the world to qualify (see also Mitchell 1994, 163–70). Nonetheless, the creole movement was in many ways a helpful one, in that it focused attention on the actual contact between speakers of Norse and English, as opposed to the Norse linguistic monuments of loanwords and place-names; but it is fair to say that, on the whole, the proponents of the creole hypothesis were both under-informed in their knowledge of Old English, Old Norse, and Viking Age England (Hines 1991 is a notable exception), and over-eager in their bold

extrapolations from analogies with radically different case-studies—a combination which too often resulted in attempts to impose a crudely monocausal interpretation (for an excellent review of the creole question see Barnes 1993, 65–74).

These observations on the importance of a sociolinguistic orientation to any study of language contact are fairly basic, and even self-evident, but on the other hand one may feel that, even amongst philologists who are genuinely familiar with the linguistic evidence, discussion of Anglo-Norse contact has not always been governed by them: it is all too easy to find somewhat unreflecting talk about the supposed ‘blending’, ‘mixing’, ‘mingling’, or ‘fusion’ of the two languages (Wrenn 1949, 65; Barber 1993, 130; Baugh and Cable 1978, 101; Strang 1970, 340). But Old Norse and Old English did not exist apart from their speakers, and one cannot mix languages as though they are colours on a palette: if English contains features which have been derived from Norse (such as loanwords), one must ask exactly how this can have happened—what precisely were the channels of contact, and methods of transfer, by which this occurred?

So, for example, it is remarkable how little work has been done on the contextual study of Norse-derived loanwords in English: traditionally they have simply been excerpted from a variety of sources (from a variety of different times and places), and gathered together into de-contextualized lists. Yet a great variety of questions arises when one considers Norse-derived loans in context; that is, as the result of variation or choice conditioned by sociolinguistic factors, and related to literary register as well as dialect geography. Why should these Norse-derived loans occur in this particular text? What is their status? Are they still perceived as foreign words or phrases, or are their origins forgotten so that they function and develop like long-established native words? An obvious place in which to explore such questions would be the works of Archbishop Wulfstan II of York. The presence of a body of Norse-derived loans in Wulfstan’s writings is a well-known feature (Hofmann 1955, 188–93; Whitelock 1976, 44–5), but there has been little attempt to examine them more closely or to account for their presence beyond a regular acknowledgement to the effect that ‘it is natural enough that an archbishop of York should adopt some of the vocabulary of the Scandinavianized North’ (Whitelock 1976, 44). However, Wulfstan was writing in standard late West Saxon, so why should he employ Norse-derived words at all? Are they technical terms—new words for new concepts, and still regarded as alien items (that is, according to the German term, *Fremdwörter*: see Wollmann 1996, 237–9)? Arguably some of his legal vocabulary might be regarded thus, but if so what does this indicate both about the intelligibility of such Norse-derived terms to Wulfstan’s intended audience and about the continued awareness among users of Old English of Old Norse as a conspicuously foreign language? Or are we to account for these words simply as features that had been borrowed by speakers of Old English in the Danelaw and so had entered general currency in the English of that region, including Wulfstan’s own idiolect on account of his residence at York—which would make their written appearance in an Old English text merely the tip of a lexical iceberg in the spoken language? Or, alternatively, are some of them long-standing and integral features of Wulfstan’s idiolect on account of his apparently East Anglian origins (Bethurum 1957, 55)? Again, questions such as

these are, admittedly, fairly obvious ones arising from a desire to contextualize linguistic usage in order to recover some of the details of the Anglo-Norse interface; but it is striking how rarely such questions have been asked, let alone answered in any sustained manner.

Related to this, one may also suggest that the greatest need in the study of the Old Norse language in England is for more investigations into the regional and chronological distribution of Norse-derived loanwords in Middle English, to match those into Norse place- and personal names (on Norse place-names see especially Fellows-Jensen 1972; 1978; 1985; on Norse personal names see especially Björkman 1910; Fellows-Jensen 1968; and Insley 1994). The study of Norse-derived loans in Old English has been well served by the collection and catalogue work of Hofmann and Peters (Hofmann 1955; Peters 1981; see also Wollmann 1996); but of course the corpus of loans in Middle English is vastly greater, and so their study has not progressed much beyond the sort of list-making mentioned above (see the appeal made in McIntosh 1978). For pioneers like the great Erik Björkman (1900–2) it was inevitable that this should be the case, but later landmarks in the study of Norse loans (such as Rynell 1948; Hug 1987) have, in many ways, continued to insufficiently orientate their investigations according to diatopic and diachronic axes (that is, attending to variation in place and time). A model for subsequent work, however, is Richard Dance's study of Norse-derived loans in South-West Midland texts in the early Middle English period (Dance forthcoming; see also Dance 1999). By restricting his corpus to a well-defined body of texts, Dance is able, for one particular time and place, to address systematically such issues as the phonology and morphology of Norse-derived loans, their usage and register, and their distribution and frequency. Analysis of these questions permits in turn discussion as to how and when such loans entered English, and how and when they reached the South-West Midlands. Since the linguistic archaeology of loanword study enables the recovery of earlier linguistic history, this is a research area from which one may justifiably expect future illumination on the interaction of speakers of Norse and English.

The purpose of this swift methodological review has not at all been to carp at earlier studies of Anglo-Norse language contact, but rather to suggest some of the ways in which, it seems to me, the findings of these earlier studies can best be interpreted and built upon, and the range of evidence can best be interrogated at the present time. In what follows, therefore, I shall briefly explore two related areas in the study of Anglo-Norse contact: evidence for the perception of Old Norse as a discrete vernacular in Viking Age England, and evidence for the co-existence of Norse and English speech communities in the bilingual society of the Danelaw.

The Old Norse Language in England

Anglo-Saxon references to the Old Norse language in England are in fact surprisingly rare, amounting to a mere three mentions in only two texts. Ealdorman Æthelweard, writing in the 980s, gives the following account of the 871 burial of ealdorman Æthelwulf in his Latin translation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Campbell 1962, 37):

Corpus quippe supra dicti ducis abstrahitur furtim, adduciturque in Merciorum prouinciam in loco qui Northuuorthige nuncupatur, iuxta autem Danaam linguam Deoraby.

(The body of the ealdorman mentioned above was carried away secretly, and was taken into Mercia, to the place called *Northworthy*, but in the Danish language Derby.)

The second text to refer to the Old Norse language is Ælfric's famous homily *De Falsis Diis* (dating probably from the 990s), in the course of which Ælfric makes equations between certain classical and Scandinavian deities (Jove and Þórr, Mercury and Óðinn, and Venus and Frigg). He remarks of Mercury (Pope 1967–68, II, 684) that 'Des god wæs [a]rwyrðe betwyx eallum hæpenum, and he is Óðon geháten oðrum naman on Denisc' ('This god was honoured amongst all heathens, and by another name he is called Óðinn in Danish'). And later, in his discussion of the names of the days of the week, he observes (Pope 1967–68, II, 686) that 'Done sixtan dæg hi gesetton þære sceamleasan gydenan Uen[us] gehaten, and Fric[g] on Denisc' ('They appointed the sixth day to the shameless goddess called Venus, and *Frigg* in Danish'). However, although these are the only instances in the homily where Ælfric refers specifically to *Denisc*, 'the Danish language' (that is, Old Norse), there are other examples where the same linguistic point is being made, such as the following (Pope 1967–68, II, 683–4):

Des Iouis is arwurðust ealra þæra goda þe þa hæpenan hæfdon on heora gedwylde; and he hatte Þór betwux sumum þeodum, þone þa Deniscan leoda lufiað swiðost.

(This Jove is the most venerable of all the gods which the heathens, in their error, possessed, and amongst certain nations he is called *Þórr*, whom the Danish people love most of all.)

Nu secgað þa Deniscan on heora gedwylde þæt se Iouis wære, þe hi Þór hátað, Mercuries sunu, ðe hi Oðon hatað; ac hi nabbað na riht. [. . .]

(Now in their error the Danes say that this Jove, whom they call *Þórr*, was the son of Mercury, whom they call *Óðinn*; but they do not maintain the truth. [. . .])

From these passages from Æthelweard and Ælfric there are two basic points to make in the present context: first, that to Anglo-Saxons *Denisc* (Old Norse) was a discernibly distinct language; and second, that *Denisc* was spoken by Danes, and Danes spoke *Denisc*. A third, supplementary point is that, since Æthelweard alludes to the Norse language in the context of a place-name, and Ælfric in the context of personal names, it seems possible that this linguistic difference was most apparent to Anglo-Saxons in the onomastic sphere; and apparent confirmation of this is provided by a charter of 1044 in which a Scandinavian recipient with an unusual or unfamiliar name is introduced as follows (Kemble 1839–48, IV, 84): 'qui juxta proprie gentis consuetudinem ab infanti etate nomen accepit Orc' ('who according to the custom of his own people from infancy

has borne the name *Orc*’) (S1004 (K772); see further Harmer 1952, 576; and Fellows-Jensen 1995, 8–90).

To modern philologists too the distinctiveness of Old Norse is unquestionable. Although occasional uncertainties can arise, there is customarily no doubt as to whether a given word or name is in origin Old English or Old Norse: there is an extensive repertoire of Norse diagnostic features (phonological, morphological, lexical), and this is why linguistic or onomastic analysis is often able to trace Norse influence—and therefore, arguably, a Norse presence—in regions where other disciplines (such as archaeology) are unable to do so. At this point, therefore, it should also be noted that there is no apparent evidence for English speakers shifting to Norse (though one would not want absolutely to exclude this as a theoretical possibility for certain times and places); and this is one important reason why, as will be seen, linguists are more ready than most to equate Norse linguistic influence with Scandinavian settlement.

The perceived distinctiveness of Old Norse as opposed to Old English in Viking Age England, and the apparent equation made in these Anglo-Saxon texts between language and people, are important points; the question inevitably arises as to the length of time Old Norse survived as—or was perceived as—a discrete language. There is no need to enter into a full discussion of this here, as it is the subject of two well-known papers by Ekwall and Page (Ekwall 1930, reprinted in Ekwall 1963, 54–67; Page 1971, reprinted (with a postscript) in Page 1995, 181–96); however, a number of points should be noted. For Ekwall, the three types of evidence available are lexical, toponymic, and epigraphical—that is, loanwords, place-names, and inscriptions. To these one should add the references by Æthelweard and Ælfric to the Old Norse language, and the poetic evidence of Cnut’s court, which indicates that the Norse language and Norse literary traditions enjoyed considerable vitality at the Danish king’s court in England (Frank 1994). In an important respect, however, the epigraphical evidence is misinterpreted by both Ekwall and Page, in that they assume that since the inscriptions at the Yorkshire churches of Aldbrough, Kirkdale, and St Mary Castlegate, York, were erected by patrons with Old Norse personal names, but are composed in the Old English language using the Roman alphabet, this must mean that Old Norse had been given up in those areas as the language of the settlers. This, however, is an unwarranted assumption, as there is, effectively, no evidence whatsoever for the writing of Old Norse in England in any other alphabet than the runic, and one can readily observe at Cnut’s court a sharp distinction between spoken Norse and written English (and Latin). Thus while there may have been two vernaculars spoken in Viking Age England, only one of them was ever written in the Roman alphabet; and so one cannot speculate on the spoken language of the patrons of inscriptions on the basis of the written evidence, nor use those inscriptions for dating Old Norse language death.

Except for the situation at Cnut’s court, none of the relevant material can be marshalled as positive evidence for the notion that the continued vitality of Old Norse into the eleventh century (and possibly the twelfth) is due to ‘recent Danes’, but beyond this it is hard to go: there would, in fact, seem to be insufficient evidence at present for determining with any precision the date of the demise of Old Norse in England—that

is to say, the date at which the last of those who had previously spoken Norse either died or shifted to speaking English.³ No doubt there must have been considerable regional differences for the time at which language shift occurred; and here again is another area in which, as noted earlier, we could learn much from regional studies of Norse-derived loanwords.⁴

Linguistic Evidence in a Bilingual Society

Of course the presence of Norse speakers in England has above all been recognized from the colossal influence exerted on toponymy and the lexicon; that is, the post-language death monuments of surviving place-names (fig. 1) and loanwords. However, one may feel that study of these monuments has too often become bogged down in the problem of numbers. It is widely recognized that the number of Norse place-names and loanwords cannot be directly correlated with the number of Scandinavian settlers, but only with the extent of Norse linguistic influence; but this does not do away with the resultant question of how one correlates extent of influence with number of settlers. It is a linguistic commonplace that loanwords of a non-need nature are primarily to be attributed to the superior prestige of speakers of the donor language (Hock 1991, 408–11); and the French loans in Middle English are the premier instance of this in the history of English. In broad terms the linguistic signs, such as they are, are that Old English and Old Norse were adstratal in Viking Age England—that is to say, they enjoyed roughly equal prestige. For if Old Norse enjoyed much greater prestige in the Viking Age, one would expect to find a great many Norse-derived loans in Old English of a non-need nature, and the continued vitality of Old Norse; whereas if Old English enjoyed much greater prestige one would expect to find few Norse loans in English and a rapid shifting of Norse speakers to English. But neither of these patterns is observable, and for this simple reason the old revisionism which ascribes the heavy linguistic influence of Old Norse to a minority of elite speakers remains hard to support.

A crucial point which impinges on the numbers question is that a speech community's lexicon and its onomasticon (that is, its total repertoire of words and name elements) should be sharply distinguished as discrete entities (see for example Nicolaisen 1976), especially when it comes to active rather than passive competence. A consequence of this is that, since language learning customarily involves a much greater appropriation of the lexicon of the target language than of its onomasticon, it is much more difficult to attribute widespread onomastic influence to a small elite than widespread lexical influence: this is supremely seen in the contrast between the

³ On the factors involved in language maintenance and shift, see, for example, Appel and Muysken 1987, 33–45.

⁴ For some recent models of Old Norse language death that have been offered, see Hansen 1984, 83–8; Thomason and Kaufman 1988, 275–304; and Kastovsky 1992, 327–32.

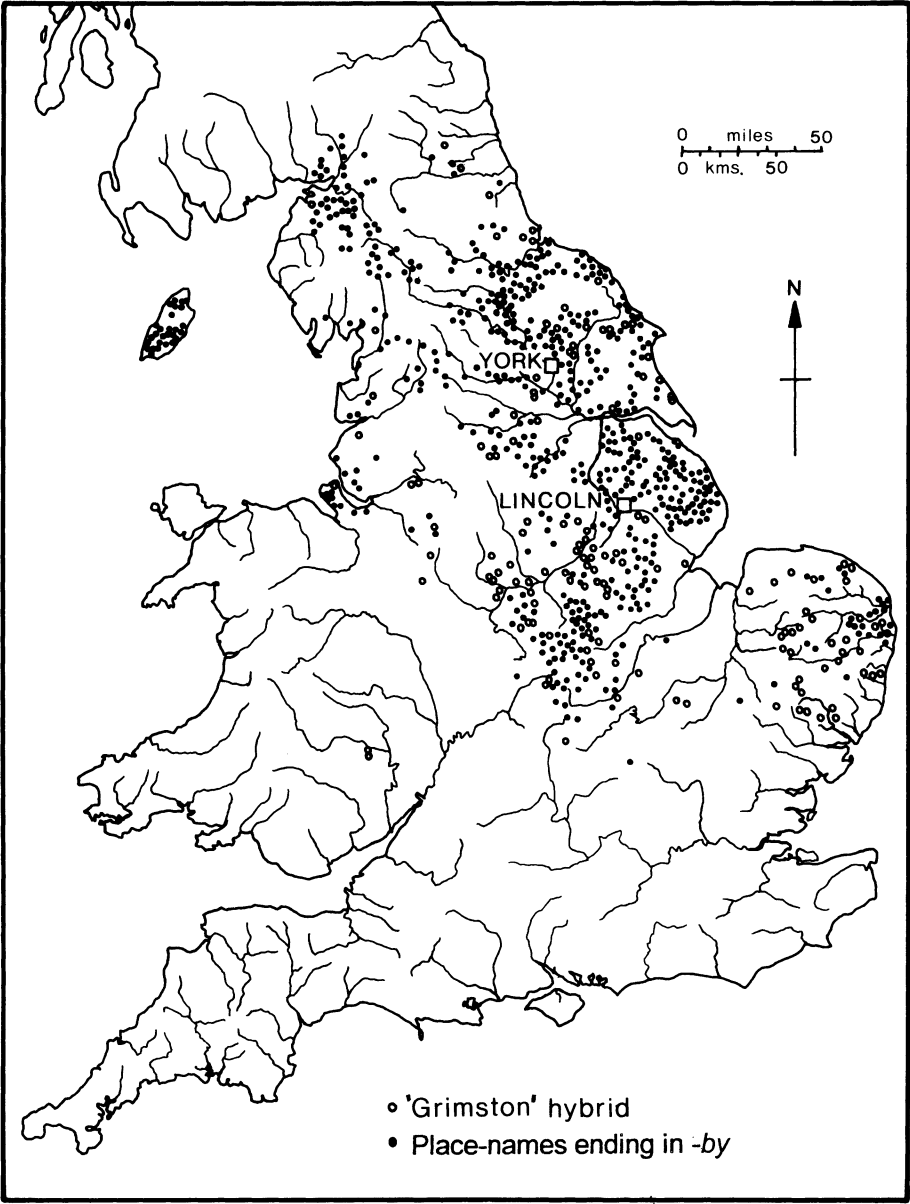


Fig. 1. Distribution of Scandinavian place-names in England:
-by names and Grimston hybrids
(after Richards 1991, 34).

relatively restricted repertoire of Norman personal names which are found in medieval England and the much more diverse repertoire of Norse personal names, importantly including women's names and those which appear to be archaic or distinctive to the Danelaw (for the classic formulation of this point see Stenton 1927, 227–33). That is, it is not the number of different people bearing Norse (or Norman) names that is significant, but rather the number of different names.

But in the area of place-names, too, this distinction between lexicon and onomasticon is an important one. It is often suggested that Norse place-names cannot be interpreted as evidence for the presence of Norse speakers on the grounds that Norse place-name elements appear to have entered the English active onomasticon; and so place-names comprising Norse elements are just as likely to derive from English speakers (see for example the comments in Richards 1991, 35; and Hadley 1997, 72). No doubt there is some truth in this, as for example in the group of post-Conquest *-by* names in northern Cumbria (Roberts 1989–90); but as a general principle it is fallacious, and would appear to be based on a false analogy with loanword evidence. In the Middle English period one can readily observe the diffusion of Norse-derived loans out of areas of Scandinavian settlement and into the south and west of England (most famously, *they*, *them*, and *their*); but one cannot observe a parallel diffusion of Norse-derived place-name elements. So, for example, Dance's study of South-West Midlands material concludes that the majority of the Norse-derived loans in early Middle English texts from that area are most likely the result of geographical diffusion (Dance forthcoming); but there is not much evidence for Norse-derived place-name elements in the South-West Midlands onomasticon. In other words, there is little evidence for the diffusion of Norse-derived place-name elements beyond areas of apparent Scandinavian settlement (that is, where there is certain evidence for the Norse language from such features as Norse inflexions preserved in place-names). Of course, this is a characteristic of place-name elements in general, and not solely of Old Norse ones: as Peter Kitson's (1995) recent work on Old English dialectology has amply demonstrated, place-name elements, unlike many lexical items, show remarkable geographical inertia and hence are excellent material for dialect-mapping, and for correlating dialect usage with settlement patterns. Thus, in the present case, there is no reason to think that Old Norse place-names are substantially found in areas in which Old Norse was never spoken: the areas of Norse place-names are likely to be directly coterminous with the areas of Norse speech and therefore with the areas of Scandinavian settlement.

The issues surveyed so far therefore amount to the simple proposition that one must not downplay or minimize the Norse linguistic element in Viking Age England—that is, the size and persistence of the Norse speech community—and with this in view we may turn more fully to the presentation of Viking Age England as a bilingual society. The passage quoted earlier from Æthelweard's Chronicle was cited in order to supply a reference to the Norse language in England; but this allusion to 'the place called *Northworthy*, but in the Danish language *Derby*' also supplies a sense of two separate speech communities independently referring to the same place by different names (see Cameron 1959, 446; Fellows-Jensen 1978, 43). Æthelweard's witness therefore

provides early testimony to the cross-over (or at least familiarity) of Norse place-names from the Norse-speaking population to the English, a cross-over which eventually happened very widely indeed.

Moreover, Scandinavianized place-names, that is, English place-names showing subsequent Norse substitution, are equally good evidence for the co-existence of speakers of the two languages. The Scandinavianization of English place-names is of course an extremely widespread and important phenomenon in Viking Age England (see Fellows-Jensen 1972, 131–68; 1978, 199–230; 1985, 192–259; Ekwall 1960, xxv–xxvi; 1963, 88–91), and a representative example would be Stainmore in Westmorland, famous in Viking history as the site of the killing of Eric Bloodaxe in 954: some early forms are *Stanmoir* c. 990, *Steinmor* c. 1230, *Steynmore* 1325, *Stanmore* 1348 (Smith 1967, II, 71). The name begins as Old English *stān-mōr* ‘rock moor’ or ‘moor of the rock’, but when Norse speakers, having heard it from the lips of Anglo-Saxons, subsequently use the name themselves they adapt it to their own speech habits by substituting cognate Norse *steinn* for English *stān*; both variants co-exist for some time, before the Norse version wins out in the modern form.

On the grounds that there appear to be sites of Scandinavian settlement or influence which bear unimpeachably English names, Gillian Fellows-Jensen has on a number of occasions declared her belief that the Scandinavian settlers in England sometimes ‘left the English names unchanged’ (1972, 251), or even ‘occupied old established villages [...] without making any attempt to alter the existing English name’ (1975, 199); but this seems to me a rather misleading view of the subject. No change would indeed be the case if English and Norse cognates were identical, but otherwise it is apparent that the settlers adapted names to their own speech habits (for example, Old English *ā* was replaced by cognate Old Norse *ei*, as in Stainmore, or /ʃ/ by /sk/, /tʃ/ by /k/, and so on). The continued existence of unaltered English forms in areas of apparent Scandinavian settlement is therefore to be explained rather by the continued survival of sufficient English speakers to pass on the English form: the evidence of an English and a Scandinavianized form existing concurrently for the same place (for example, *Stān-mōr/Steinn-mór*), like the evidence of independent English and Norse forms existing concurrently (for example, *Northworthy/Derby*), is thus widespread evidence for a bilingual society, and for the co-existence of speakers of Old English and Old Norse in the late Anglo-Saxon period. This remains true even when the forms are preserved only in the Middle English period (as for many northern place-names), at a time when Old Norse must have already died out as a spoken language, for the two forms must at least have arisen in such a bilingual community.

It is also important to remember that the extant texts of the Anglo-Saxon period are, as noted earlier, the product and preserve of the English-using community, and that therefore there was arguably little likelihood of Norse names being preserved (whether Scandinavianizations or original coinages) unless they passed into general currency, or at least were not known solely to the Norse-speaking community. This would explain why few Norse names are recorded in areas which came under Scandinavian rule or occupation for a brief time but did not experience extensive settlement. Fellows-Jensen

(1995, 21), for example, has observed that 'A study of the areas where the invading Danes only stayed for short periods, for example the sites of their winter-quarters, has revealed that they showed no tendency to interfere with the local place-names in these cases', and elsewhere (1994, 132) that 'It can only be assumed that the Danes, though resident in these areas, for some reason did not coin place-names'. But again this seems to me a misleading view, for it is a question not of the coinage of names but of their preservation. Where pre-existing English names were not identical with their Norse cognates, Scandinavians in England must, in referring to places amongst themselves, have 'coined' place-names, whether new ones of their own or—much more likely—Scandinavianizations of English names; but there is no reason at all why English sources should record such forms unless they passed into usage amongst the English-speaking (or rather, English-writing) community. An obvious modern analogy would be the Anglicization of French and Belgian names during the First World War: English adaptations such as *Eatapples* and *Wipers* clearly represent toponymic 'interference' or 'coinages', but one would not expect such forms to occur in French or Belgian sources, let alone to have any lasting effect on the nomenclature of those countries.

Indeed, in this context there could well be a greater consideration of what exactly is meant by reference to the 'coining' of place-names, as it is an expression regularly employed in the study of Scandinavian settlement. In particular, a distinction might be drawn between the 'coining' of major settlement names on the one hand, and of minor names and topographical names on the other, for excessive concentration on the former may give the impression that 'coining' a place-name is some sort of deliberate process like registering a patent: this is especially the case with accounts that try to explain Norse settlement names by reference to the fragmentation of estates rather than to the widespread presence of speakers of Norse (see for example Sawyer 1982, 102–5; Richards 1991, 35–6); and a further distinction could be made for settlement names with a Norse personal name as their specific (that is, their first element, according to the Germanic pattern of name formation). It is indeed conceivable that new names were deliberately bestowed on new sub-divisions as a result of new Scandinavian lordship, but as a general explanation for Norse place-names the theory is inadequate, as it applies to only a fraction of the relevant material. Perhaps, therefore, there might be more discussion of the Norse river-names in England, as these cannot be accounted for by appeal to the 'fragmenting estates' paradigm: river-names are famously the class of place-names most resistant to change (hence their importance in the search for 'Old European': see Nicolaisen 1971; 1982), and so the fact that a number of English rivers assume Norse names would indeed seem to indicate a considerable and widespread presence of speakers of Norse (Ekwall 1928, xlv–xlvii). In other words, closer attention to the processes by which place-names are 'coined', and less exclusive emphasis on major settlement names (especially those containing personal names), means that it becomes all too apparent that, in Patrick Wormald's (1982, 147) phrase, 'a mere change of landlords will not account for all the evidence'.

Similarly, as the example of Danish winter camps indicates, one suspects that certain issues might be clarified by more thought about the transmission and recording

of place-names, and less exclusive emphasis on their original coinage; and in doing so a sharp distinction must be maintained between oral and written transmission. For this reason one may suggest that it is important to look at the whole corpus of forms available for each name (for example, as cited in the volumes of the English Place-Name Society): it is not sufficient simply to check the language of the proposed etymology, nor even to note that Norse and English variants are both recorded; rather, for reconstructing the linguistic history of Viking Age England as a bilingual society it is essential to attend to the relative proportions of English and Norse forms, to the sources in which they occur, and of course to the degree to which those sources are independent or inter-related.

I end, therefore, where I began, with McIntosh's (1994, 137) words of wisdom: 'Fundamentally, what we mean by "languages in contact" is "users of language in contact" and to insist upon this is much more than a mere terminological quibble and has far from trivial consequences'. In this chapter I have attempted to sketch out some of the questions that arise when one adopts a firmly sociolinguistic perspective on Anglo-Norse contact and the bilingual society of Viking Age England, and to suggest some of the ways in which the available evidence might be interrogated. There is much still to be learned about Anglo-Norse language contact and the contribution of Old Norse to the evolution of English; but I would assert again that further thinking must be careful to observe the centrality of speakers in linguistic contact and change.

ABBREVIATIONS

- K Kemble, J.M. ed., *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols, 1839–48, London: English Historical Society
- S Sawyer, P.H., *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated list and bibliography*, 1968, London: Royal Historical Society

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‘Hamlet and the Princes of Denmark’: Lordship in the Danelaw, c. 860–954¹

DAWN M. HADLEY

The study of the Scandinavian impact on England has long been preoccupied with estimating the scale of the settlement (Hadley 1997; Trafford, this volume). This has proved to be a fruitless endeavour, not least because while our evidence has much to reveal about the Scandinavian *influence* on English society, this cannot easily be translated into numerical impact (Lund 1981, 167). Anglo-Saxon society was not uniform and the settlers were not a socially undifferentiated mass, and any interpretation of their impact needs to take account of this (Hadley 1997, 87–8). Indeed, nearly twenty years ago, Patrick Wormald (1982a, 144) observed that for too long students of the Viking Age had had very little to say about the leaders of the raiders and settlers, and that the study of the Scandinavian leaders could not be left out of their remit for much longer. This chapter proposes that many of the perceivable differences in the impact of the Scandinavians are the result of variations in the absorption of a new ruling elite in parts of northern and eastern England, rather than of the varying scale of the settlement in different regions, as has traditionally been thought (see also Innes, this volume).

How was political and seigneurial authority established and underpinned in the areas of Scandinavian settlement in the later ninth and tenth centuries? The written sources for northern and eastern England during this period furnish a bewildering catalogue of rulers, battles, peace treaties, and changing political control in those

¹ The title of this essay is influenced by a remark made by Patrick Wormald (1982, 144) concerning the lack of interest among Viking scholars in kingship. I am grateful to Alexandra Norman for drawing the illustrations, and to Julian Richards for his comments on this chapter.

regions (Stafford 1989, 24–58; Hadley 2000a, 5–15). The coinage from the region names additional, otherwise unknown, rulers (Dolley 1978; 1965, 18), and the stone sculpture of northern England hints at the existence of a stratum of leading individuals and families who were sufficiently important, and wealthy, to commission and display stone sculpture on their estates (Hadley 2000a, 313–18; see also Stocker, and Sidebottom, this volume). This chapter concentrates on the strategies employed by successive rulers in northern and eastern England to establish their position and authority. Rulers used the Church, naming-strategies and language, material culture, and burial rituals to establish their authority, which involved both drawing on older traditions and on innovation in the process. It is apparent that past traditions were important to lords in northern and eastern England, although much that was drawn from existing traditions was, in fact, augmented and transformed in order to meet the demands of ruling in the present.

The Scandinavian Background

The social and cultural environment from which the settlers and their rulers came has not received the attention it merits in discussions of their subsequent impact on England (Wormald 1982a, 144). It is, admittedly, not a straightforward undertaking, given the relative paucity of written sources. However, documentary evidence—both contemporary perspectives from outside Scandinavia and later Scandinavian written sources—and, above all, archaeological evidence allow some tentative conclusions to be drawn about what Scandinavian society may have been like in the Viking Age (Karras 1988; Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 1–26, 129–43; Lund 1995; Graham-Campbell 1994, 38–75). This evidence has given rise to much debate, and earlier views that Viking Age Scandinavia was characterized by a free peasant democracy have been modified in the light of new evidence, particularly archaeological, concerning the existence of powerful lordship and kingship. This is suggested by, for example, archaeological evidence for the construction of substantial earthwork defences in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries (Roesdahl 1994; Axboe 1999, 115–16) and by the erection of rune-stones in the tenth and eleventh centuries recording the names of lords and their followers (Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 10–16). Scandinavia has generally been considered to have been characterized by non-urbanized societies prior to the tenth century, but it is now becoming clear that trading centres of varying size were found across Scandinavia, especially in coastal districts, from the fourth century, although many were, admittedly, short-lived (Callmer 1994; Feveile 1994; Helle 1994; Nielsen, Randsborg, and Thrane 1994). This implies that there were kings and other rulers who initiated, protected, and presumably ‘taxed’, or otherwise exploited, such trading places (Axboe 1999, 114).

Nonetheless, it is clear from contemporary written evidence that the powers of some kings were limited by the collective voice of at least some of their subjects. For example, the late ninth-century *Vita Anskarii*, by Rimbart, Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen (Germany), describes the missionary activity in Birka (Sweden) of Anskar, his predecessor as archbishop, where the king had to consult with two assemblies before he could allow Anskar to continue his work (Sawyer 1982b, 54). Moreover, both the

documentary and the archaeological evidence suggests that power was distributed among a multiplicity of lords. There is, for example, rarely any indication that the lords with whom western kings made deals had significant power in the Scandinavian homelands. Moreover, many of the kings named in genealogies are not commemorated on rune-stones and *vice versa*, suggesting limitations on the powers of the kings named in the genealogies (Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 86–90). Furthermore, although contrary to earlier interpretations (see below), the elaborate nature of some of the burials from the Viking Age may suggest a fragile social and political authority in some regions that needed to be under-pinned by an elaborate burial rite (Graham-Campbell 1994, 31–5, 40–3; Halsall 1995, 251–4, 264–7).

Recent work on the archaeological evidence from Scandinavia has transformed previous interpretations of Scandinavian society on the eve of the Viking Age. Where once the Danish territories were thought to have been a politically weak region in comparison with the Swedish and Norwegian regions, now it is the early emergence of the Danish kingdom that attracts most scholarly attention. One indication of the emergence of Danish power from the fifth century comes from the use in Denmark of gold bracteates, which had initially carried depictions of the bust of Roman emperors, but which in the fifth and sixth centuries depicted the prince of the gods, Odin (Hedeager 1992, 289; 1999). The rejection of Roman ideology and the replacement of it with a divine figure may have been a means by which kings underpinned their authority, by transferring their political ideals to the religious field, and deifying their own lineage, a development common to other contemporary European societies (Hedeager 1992, 289; 1999). The emergence of animal art in Scandinavia during the sixth and seventh centuries provided a symbolic language that was used into the Viking Age, although only in Denmark can it be shown to have been in continuous production, and it was there that innovation took place, providing another indication of the strength of the Danish polity (Hedeager 1992, 293). This new interpretation has significance for our understanding of the burial practices of Scandinavia both before and during the Viking Age. The elaborate burial grounds from northern Scandinavia, such as those at Vendel and Valsgärde (Sweden) and Borre (Norway), have often been regarded as characteristic of Scandinavian society both before and during the Viking Age, and as indications of powerful elites in those regions. By comparison, the archaeology of Denmark, where such elaborate burials are rare before the tenth century, has been regarded as an indication of a region that was poor, politically weak, and remote from wider European society (discussed in Hedeager 1992). Yet this interpretation stands in contrast to the evidence from Denmark of the use of gold bracteates and of the development of animal art. Accordingly, more recent interpretations of the archaeological record have suggested that the opposite of traditional views may be true of the burial evidence—with elaborate funerary displays in other regions indicating a relatively unstable political structure, in which there was great competition for power, whereas the relatively unelaborate burials of Denmark from the fifth to the ninth century may be an indication of a strong kingdom, with a powerful land-owning aristocracy (Hedeager, 1992, 282–300; see also Halsall, this volume, on the relationship between social structure and funerary display).

This interpretation of Danish society is supported by the presence of the great earthwork defence across the neck of the Jutland peninsula, called the Danevirke. Dendrochronological dating of the timbers from the ramparts which carried palisades suggests that the earliest section of the earthwork, the main rampart, was constructed in the middle of the seventh century. The northern rampart has produced dates of 737/8, and dates acquired from other sections suggest that they were added during the reign of King Godfred in the early ninth century and by King Harald Bluetooth in the later tenth century (Roesdahl 1994; Axboe 1999, 115–16). Dendrochronological dating also reveals that the Kanhave Canal was dug in the early eighth century, and that coastal defences and naval bases were constructed at about the same time (Rieck 1991; Roesdahl 1994; Axboe 1999, 116).

In the ninth and tenth centuries, royal power in Denmark was, however, challenged. This is revealed by contemporary documentary sources, which record that in 810 King Godfred was murdered and that his successors often struggled to maintain control over the regions that Godfred had ruled. Danish overlordship outside the peninsula was not fully re-established until the middle of the tenth century under Harald Bluetooth, who proclaimed on a rune-stone he erected at Jelling that he had won the whole of Denmark and Norway (Krogh 1982; Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 51–6). These dynastic conflicts and challenges to the political structure are seemingly reflected by the richly furnished Danish burials of the tenth century, and by the monumental barrows erected by the predecessor of Harald Bluetooth, Gorm (Hedeager 1992, 297; Krogh 1982). It has also been proposed that the tenth-century fashion for the display of rune-stones, particularly in areas in which the Danish dynasty was attempting to extend its authority, was also linked to a period during which Danish royal authority was under threat or was tenuous (Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 10–16).

These most recent interpretations of the archaeological evidence fit well with interpretations of documentary evidence for the Viking Age. On the basis of the fragmentary documentary record, and by analogy with other better-documented early medieval Germanic peoples, Wormald (1982a, 144–8) has discussed the sorts of social and political developments in Viking Age Scandinavia that may have led to the departure for western Europe of many people from that region. He suggested that the emergence of ‘royal’ dynasties in parts of Scandinavia during the Viking Age caused a great deal of competition for power and commonly led to the exile or departure of disaffected followers or off-shoots of the various dynasties, who went off in search of somewhere to rule. This suggests that internal factors were important in bringing about the so-called Viking Age, and that the lure of wealth in western Europe may not have been the only cause of the Viking raids (see also Sawyer 1982a; 1982b, 65–77). Once removed from their background, and as they sought to establish themselves in an unstable environment, it is perhaps not surprising that they should have come so quickly to adopt the trappings of lordship prevalent in England, including, in particular, the support of the Church. Irrespective of the personal beliefs of the settlers and of the readiness with which they converted to Christianity (Abrams, this volume), there is no doubt that the Church often provided the settlers with a means to legitimate their rule

(Wormald 1982a, 148; Hadley 1997, 94–5). Indigenous secular rulers also provided an under-pinning for rule by Scandinavian lords, as the treaty between Alfred and Guthrum makes clear (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 171–2; Kershaw, this volume). The social structures of Anglo-Saxon England were not as dissimilar to those found in contemporary Scandinavia as was once thought. Certainly, there were differences. There was, for example, little reliance on writing, and text was not used. While there was missionary activity to some parts of Scandinavia in the ninth century (Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 100–1), Christianity may have been largely unknown, although the reliance of lords on religious ideology and deities was not, as we have seen. Hence, on the whole, the leaders of the Scandinavian settlers in England were faced with a society which, while different, was not entirely unfamiliar.

In sum, the Scandinavian homelands were characterized by complex societies, with developed elites, albeit ones that were challenged for authority on a regular basis, and which had to utilize prominent symbols of their authority in order to under-pin it, notably funerary displays and deities. The leaders of the Scandinavians who eventually settled in northern and eastern England were, as we shall see, concerned to secure, in addition to movable wealth, somewhere to rule, and the means to secure their authority.

Rulers in the Danelaw

Where and with whom did authority lie in northern and eastern England in the later ninth and tenth centuries? The major written sources for the region—the various manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (EHD, no. 1), the anonymous tenth- and eleventh-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Arnold 1882–5, I, 196–214; EHD, no. 6), and the early twelfth-century writings attributed to Symeon of Durham (Arnold 1882–5)—reveal a bewildering array of rulers (Hadley 2000a, 5–15). These sources allow us to chart the changes in lordship in northern and eastern England, although they provide little information about motives. The prelude to settlement was the arrival in 865 of the great army (*micel here*) under the leadership of Ivarr the Boneless and Halfdan, which, in addition to being larger than any of the previous raiding bands, remained in England through the winters (Campbell 1962, c. 35; ASC s.a. 866). This army adopted the strategy of establishing indigenous lords to rule on its behalf in the places it occupied: in 866 the army occupied York, and after the existing kings, Ælle and Osberht, had been killed in battle, it established an Englishman, Egbert, as king (Arnold 1882–5, I, 55; II, 106, 110; Coxe 1841–2, I, 298–9); during the winter of 873–4 the army stayed at Repton, where it ousted the Mercian king, Burgred, and handed the kingdom of Mercia to Ceolwulf II (ASC s.a. 874). The involvement of Viking armies in existing internecine disputes also appears to have been a feature of their activities in the later ninth century. Burgred and Ceolwulf were apparently members of rival Mercian royal lines, and the Viking involvement in Mercia may have been precipitated by Mercian factionalism. Although Ceolwulf was described as ‘a foolish king’s thegn’ in the common stock of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC s.a. 874), he was certainly acceptable enough to the Mercian bishops and nobility to have issued charters which

they witnessed (Wormald 1982b, 138). Meanwhile, the political situation in ninth-century Northumbria was sufficiently complex and faction-ridden for it to be plausible that the army had involved itself in a factional dispute; indeed, their candidate, Egbert, was acceptable enough to Archbishop Wulfhere of York for the two of them to flee Northumbria together in the face of another outbreak of factionalism, which brought Ricsige to power (Arnold 1882–5, I, 56, 225; II, 110; Coxe 1841–2, I, 325; ASC s.a. 867; cf. Wormald 1982b, 135). Accommodation with Viking armies was increasingly an option for indigenous lords, including Æthelwold, the nephew of King Alfred of Wessex, who, following Alfred's death in 899, 'went to the Danish army in Northumbria, and they accepted him as king and gave allegiance to him'. He was subsequently accepted by the Viking army in Essex, but was soon after killed by the army of Alfred's successor, Edward the Elder. One of those who died alongside Æthelwold was Brihtsige, son of the *Ætheling*, Beornoth. The form of the names Brihtsige and Beornoth and the use of the term *Ætheling* (throneworthy prince) suggest that Æthelwold had been joined by a member of one of the Mercian royal lines, indicating another English faction who preferred to side with the Danes rather than the house of Wessex (ASC s.a. 900, 902, 903; Stafford 1989, 24).

Wintering and raiding appears eventually to have turned to settlement: in 876 Halfdan went north with half of the army where he 'shared out the land of the Northumbrians, and they proceeded to plough and to support themselves', and the following year the other half of the army divided half the kingdom of Mercia among its members and granted the rest to Ceolwulf (ASC s.a. 876, 877). Having made peace with Alfred of Wessex and accepted baptism in 878, Guthrum subsequently went into East Anglia in 880 and 'settled there and shared out the land' (ASC s.a. 878; Asser, c. 56). The mechanisms by which the leaders of the armies secured their authority are largely lost to us, but it is likely that they continued to rely on indigenous support. This is suggested by, for example, the election c. 883 of one member of a Viking army, Guthred, as king at the behest of the community of St Cuthbert, then based at Chester-le-Street (Co. Durham) (Campbell 1962, c. 51; Arnold 1882–5, I, 203; II, 82, 92, 110, 119). Other examples include the support given to successive rulers in York by the archbishop (Hadley 2000a, 14–15), and the legitimacy given to the rule of Guthrum in East Anglia by his treaty with Alfred (Kershaw, this volume). The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* provides a unique insight into relations between a Scandinavian ruler and indigenous lords when it records that Ragnald divided out the land he had acquired in battle at Corbridge (Northumb) c. 918 to, among others, the Englishmen Esbrid and Ælstan—who were the sons of Eadred, the previous holder of the land and tenant of the community of St Cuthbert (Arnold 1882–5, I, 210; Morris 1977, 97). These events reveal that political interests in northern and eastern England were not divided straightforwardly between those of the 'Scandinavians' and those of the 'English'. From the outset, Scandinavian settlement and the establishment of authority by Scandinavian lords required indigenous support, which was often, it appears, willingly offered.

Western Mercia came under West Saxon overlordship at some point following the disappearance of Ceolwulf II from the historical record after 877 (Stenton 1971,

259–60; Dumville 1992b, 7). The fate of the rest of Mercia is less clear. Although the East Midlands came to be referred to as the territory of the Five Boroughs (that is, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, and Stamford), it is not known when this grouping was created, nor when the region came to be regarded as a single political unit. The Five Boroughs are first linked together in an Old English poem incorporated in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC s.a. 942) entry for 942, commemorating the capture of the region by King Edmund of Wessex. This grouping was more than a mere device of the poet who composed the entry, and this is indicated by its appearance in Æthelred II's law-code issued at Wantage (997) (Liebermann 1903, 228–33; EHD, no. 43), which reveals that the Five Boroughs had their own court, administration, and legal identity, and by its mention in the Chronicle entry for 1013 (ASC s.a. 1013; Stafford 1985, 112–16). It is not possible to determine whether the confederacy of the Five Boroughs was a Scandinavian institution, as has often been supposed, or rather the result of West Saxon administrative re-organization. There is, however, other evidence to suggest that control over the East Midlands in at least the later ninth and early tenth century was fragmented. Coins struck in the name of an otherwise unknown king, Halfdan, indicate that he ruled somewhere in the North-East Midlands c. 900 (Dolley 1965, 18). Military rulers about whom little is known appear to have exercised control from towns elsewhere in the East Midlands—men such as Jarl Thurcytel at Bedford, Jarl Thurferth at Northampton, and Jarl Toli at Huntingdon (ASC A s.a. 914, 917; Blake 1962, 98). However, it is possible that some form of political authority over the region of the Five Boroughs lay between the armies of East Anglia and Northumbria at least in the later ninth and first half of the tenth century. Indeed, the late tenth-century chronicler Æthelweard claims that King Alfred of Wessex sent an ambassador to York in 894 to negotiate over land to the west of Stamford (Lincs), which may indicate that there had been a revival of ancient claims of Northumbria to rule south of the Humber (Campbell 1962, c. 51; Stafford 1985, 112–14). This may also have lain behind the later attempt by the Viking King of York, Olaf Guthfrithsson, to extend his rule to the south in 940—when he was accompanied by the archbishop (ASC D s.a. 943; Dolley 1965, 18).

It is notable that contemporary chroniclers, while sometimes using Old Norse terms, tended to describe the leaders of the settlers by familiar terms, including that of 'king' (Wormald 1982a, 144). This suggests that, first, there was something about some leaders that set them apart from others, and that, second, this difference was recognizable in English terms as 'kingship'.² This may reflect both the attempts of the Scandinavian leaders to adopt the trappings of kingship and also the desires of the English courts, for which the various contemporary chroniclers spoke, to integrate the leaders of the incomers into a social and political structure with which they were familiar. The ways in which Scandinavian lords secured their control over parts of northern and eastern

² Where kings are not mentioned, such as in the ninth-century account of the Norwegian Ottar's travels around the Baltic, they may have been omitted because the English author of the text was attempting to imply that King Alfred of Wessex was his ruler: Sawyer and Sawyer 1993, 88.

England are not revealed in the documentary sources, although other types of evidence, such as coinage, monumental sculpture, and burial practices, suggest some of the ways in which they adopted or transformed aspects of indigenous culture (see below). The processes by which the kings of Wessex eventually secured control over northern England are, however, better documented. It is known that King Edward the Elder encouraged some of his nobles to purchase land from the Scandinavians in advance of the wars of conquest by the house of Wessex (EHD no. 103; Stenton 1910, 74–5). This was followed by a succession of battles which saw the West Saxons wrest control of the various *burhs* of northern and eastern England, and a series of submissions and treaties, many of which did not remain effective for long (Stafford 1989, 31–44). Divisions among the Scandinavians may have been significant in the rapidly changing political situation in the region, and may have lain behind, for example, the readiness with which ‘the people of York’ agreed to come under Æthelflaed’s control shortly before her death in 918 (ASC B s.a. 918), and the submission of successive Scandinavian leaders to West Saxon kings, which may have been an attempt by the Scandinavian leaders concerned to gain legitimacy in the North (ASC s.a. 906, 910, 912–18, 920, 926, 943–4, 947–8).

Eastern England appears to have been brought under West Saxon control in 917 when the people of the region ‘who had previously been under Danish domination [. . .] and the entire Danish army in East Anglia’ submitted to Edward the Elder (ASC A s.a. 917). However, control over the North fluctuated until 954 when Erik Bloodaxe was expelled from York by King Eadred (Sawyer 1995 on the chronology of the 940s and 950s). It was by no means a foregone conclusion that West Saxon control would last, but it did even if the West Saxons did not always have a very secure grip on the North. The southern kings of England had to rely on securing the support of lords with land and power in the North, and had to handle the continuing independent tendencies of the northerners with great care for the rest of the tenth and on into the eleventh century (Whitelock 1959; Innes, this volume).

The written sources provide, then, a partial record of the succession of rulers, battles, and treaties issues that brought about changes in political control in northern and eastern England. Although it is difficult to identify the motives and intentions that lay behind these developments, it is apparent that the political fortunes of those regions were not determined simply as a result of a changing balance of power between ‘English’ and ‘Scandinavian’ interests, since these were clearly divided. Political and military allegiances were not formed solely along ‘ethnic’ lines, and the previous histories and identities of the various regions of northern and eastern England remained relevant and to some extent determined the actions of successive rulers in the later ninth and earlier tenth centuries, although new allegiances and areas of political control continued to be formed. The divisions within Northumbria between the areas of Bernician and Deiran control continued to play a part, as, perhaps, can be seen from the behaviour of the community of St Cuthbert and the earls of Bamburgh, on the one hand, and the archbishops of York, on the other; their areas of interest continued to be different through the later ninth and tenth centuries, and the interests of the house of

Wessex in the community of St Cuthbert may have been sparked by rivalry with rulers in York (see below).

There are indications that the narrative accounts leave much undisclosed, especially when compared with the evidence of place-names, of archaeology, of later law-codes, and of the social structure and ecclesiastical organization of the region at a later date. Many of the features of the society of northern and eastern England that were once regarded as Scandinavian innovations have been assigned pre-Viking origins in recent studies: in particular, the free peasants (*liberi homines* and sokemen) and the multi-vill estates (sokes) of the Danelaw, and aspects of the legal and administrative systems of northern and eastern England (for a review of the literature see Hadley 2000a, 22–6). This new research implies that the Scandinavians took over and adopted existing institutions, their main contribution being terminological (Jones 1965; Morris 1981; Stafford 1986). However, it is arguable that the emphasis on continuity has been too great (Hadley 1996a; 1997, 76), and we must not overlook the evidence that points to the continuing transformation of society and its institutions in the areas of Scandinavian settlement during the tenth century, much of which had little to do with that settlement. Nonetheless, this does not affect the essential point that the Scandinavian leaders proceeded to exploit the countryside in the same manner as their indigenous counterparts, although, at the same time, bringing new cultural forces to bear (Hadley 2000a, 298–341).

Churches in the Danelaw

It is apparent that churches were central to the exercise of lordship in northern and eastern England in the ninth and tenth centuries. The activities of the archbishops of York and of the community of St Cuthbert may have been only the well-documented examples of ecclesiastics providing legitimation and support to rulers from a variety of backgrounds. In addition to revealing the names of rulers about whom we would otherwise know nothing, such as ‘Knutr’ and Sihtric who both ruled in York towards the end of the ninth century, the evidence of the coinage issued in the Danelaw in the later ninth and tenth centuries indicates a reliance on ecclesiastical support and the utilization of Christian imagery in the form of saints’ cults (Dolley 1965; 1978; North 1980, 110–11). Once they had departed their homelands it is not surprising that the leaders of the Scandinavians should have readily accepted aspects of Christianity, as they sought to establish themselves in an unstable environment—in which other Scandinavian leaders and indigenous lords were vying for power—since the Church could offer models for kingship and the exercise of power (Wormald 1982a, 144–7; the extent to which this means the settlers may then be called Christian is a moot point, see Abrams, this volume). Moreover, the reality of the situation was that churches in northern and eastern England possessed huge resources, and were able to marshal support, both military and moral, where required. Alignment with the Church also helped Scandinavian rulers to atone for the deeds that they had earlier perpetrated; this

may, in part, account for the minting of coins in East Anglia in the later ninth century which bore the name of St Edmund, the king murdered by a Viking army in 870 (Whitelock 1937–45a, 164–8). The Church had a mutual interest in such a development because it helped to bring order to a complex political situation, and because the Church had traditionally relied on secular support. The attempts of the house of Wessex to secure control of northern England, and its attacks both direct and indirect on churches in the region (see below), may also have been relevant to the mutual benefits perceived in collaboration between the Scandinavian leaders and churches and ecclesiastics in the North (Hadley 1997, 94–5).

Collaboration with ecclesiastics, and with secular lords promoting ‘Christian’ forms of lordship, proceeded along a number of lines. The baptism of the newly arrived pagans was clearly a major aim. A few successes are documented: the baptism of ‘pagans’ in the vicinity of Horningsea (Cambs) in the late ninth or early tenth century by the priest Coenwald (Whitelock 1937–45a, 169); the baptism of Guthrum following his defeat by Alfred at Edington in 878 (Asser, c. 56); the baptism of the wife and sons of the Viking lord Hæsten sometime before 893 (ASC s.a. 893); the acceptance of Christianity by Sihtric, King of York, following his marriage to King Athelstan’s sister in 926 (ASC D s.a. 926; Coxe 1841–2, I, 385); and the baptism of Olaf Sihtricsson and the confirmation of King Ragnald, at which King Edmund stood sponsor (ASC s.a. 943). Finally, although we do not know whether he was baptised, the election of Guthred as king was legitimated by Christian associations (including an appearance by St Cuthbert—EHD, no. 6, c. 13; see Abrams, and Innes, this volume), and he was seemingly sufficiently acculturated to Christianity to have been permitted burial in York Minster in 895 (Campbell 1962, c. 51; Arnold 1882–5, I, 203; II, 82, 92, 110, 119). These examples suggest that the role of kings and individual ecclesiastics was central to the conversion of the Scandinavian leaders, and to the integration of them into Christian forms of lordship and kingship. They also suggest that baptism was central to securing political relations between leaders, which is what standing sponsor at baptism or confirmation implied. The documentary sources do not, however, reveal how the mass of the Scandinavian settlers were converted (Abrams, this volume). It is difficult to envisage how the Church managed to deal with the Scandinavian settlers and their paganism given the apparent disappearance of many religious communities and the vacancy of most of the bishoprics of northern and eastern England between the later ninth and mid-tenth century, which between them had been responsible both for providing pastoral care and for training new recruits for the religious life (see Barrow, this volume). Nonetheless, it seems plausible to assume that the conversion of the Scandinavian settlers was achieved within the areas of Scandinavian settlement, and through the efforts of the ecclesiastics of that region (Abrams, and Barrow, this volume), even if it was, by necessity, on an *ad hoc* basis. It is noteworthy that there is no tradition of missionary activity from Wessex to northern and eastern England, and this absence may be significant, especially when we remember that there *is* a small written tradition about West Saxon missionary activity in Scandinavia (Abrams 1995). In any case, the evidence available to us, both documentary and material culture, largely provides

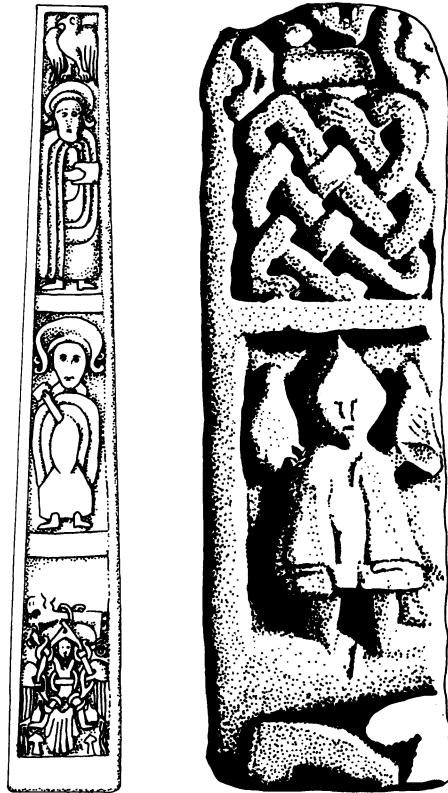
insights into the reactions of the Scandinavian elite to the Church, and *vice versa*, and has little to reveal about the masses (see Abrams, this volume for discussion of possible comparative approaches to this latter issue).

There is little documentary evidence for the relationship between the Scandinavian settlers and churches and ecclesiastics, or about the role of the latter two in the political struggles of the ninth and tenth centuries. However, these issues may be explored further through an examination of the sculptural and burial evidence from the Danelaw as other chapters in this volume reveal. The stone sculpture of the Danelaw, which was largely displayed in or near churches, was utilized by secular lords both in order to memorialize themselves and their families and to display their allegiances (Hadley 1997, 91–2, 94; 2000a, 313–18). Elsewhere in this volume David Stocker and Phil Sidebottom discuss the ways in which sculpture was utilized in competitive social display, and recent discussion (e.g. Everson and Stocker 1999, 84–7) has focussed on the ways in which the different repertoires of motifs found on sculpture—as, indeed, on many forms of material culture (see Hall, and Thomas, this volume)—were chosen in order to make statements about the political and social allegiances of the elite groups in given regions. Although there has been much debate about the supposedly ‘pagan’ elements on the sculptures, in reality there is little about them that is not appropriate to a Christian milieu (fig. 2). Indeed, the Church had long proved itself adept at adapting itself to the aristocratic ethos within secular society (Wormald 1978, 57). It is plausible that the motifs displayed on some sculptures were deliberately ambiguous, reflecting both Christian and pagan traditions, such as those involving serpents (fig. 3). Other sculptures appear to have drawn parallels between Christian teaching and pagan mythology, such as on the Nunburnholme (Yorks) cross-shaft where a eucharistic image is—following re-carving—accompanied by a depiction of Sigurd drinking the blood of the dragon (Lang 1976; Bailey 1980, 83–4; 1997, 77–94). In effect, Scandinavian mythology was being presented along with Christian parallels, and Christian teaching was being presented in Scandinavian terms (Bailey 1997, 77–94). The display of stone sculpture may, then, have served both to signal something about the status and allegiances of a lord, and to reflect, or perhaps to encourage, the acculturation process.

In interpreting the Viking Age sculpture from the region there has been a tendency to concentrate upon its antecedents in England or Scandinavia. Yet there is much that cannot be directly paralleled, and it seems apparent that much was entirely new in the tenth century, both in terms of style and form (Stocker, this volume). Although stone sculpture certainly existed in pre-Viking England, new forms emerged following the Scandinavian settlement (such as hogbacks, and certain types of wheel-heads; Lang 1983; 1984), with much more that was clearly for funerary purposes (notably grave covers) than had previously been the case (Stocker, this volume). Furthermore, although many of the traditions of ornamentation found on the sculpture are known in Scandinavia, they were not, on the whole, found on stone, with the notable exception of the Gotland picture-stones, which are very different in form and style from what is subsequently found in northern England (Graham-Campbell 1994, 40, 46–7). If the patrons and sculptors of the tenth century were, then, looking back to past traditions,

Fig. 2. (*left*) Reconstruction of a cross-shaft from Leeds (Yorks). Weland the Smith is depicted on the bottom, and is accompanied on the cross-shaft by a series of evangelists and ecclesiastics, birds, and figures with wing-like cloaks. Was the sculpture drawing a parallel between Weland, winged angels, and the evangelists?

Fig. 3. (*right*) Cross-shaft from Kirklevington (Yorks). Is this figure Odin with his ravens? Elsewhere Christian saints and even Christ are depicted with birds.



they were, at the same time, also adapting the sculpture for a new context and audience, and leading the way in the development of taste or fashion. If the sculpture, in its form and ornamentation, was meant to refer to the past traditions of England and Scandinavia, then it was a reference to a past that never quite existed. It may be that the manipulation of pre-existing cultural and artistic traditions following political conquest involved drawing on previous artistic traditions only in a very general way.³

This argument may be extended to other aspects of tenth-century society—history-writing and legal codification in particular. The concern to record and define the past saw the past manipulated and transformed to fit the needs of new political and cultural contexts. For example, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* contains an account of the miracles that St Cuthbert allegedly performed for King Alfred of Wessex while he was in hiding in the Somerset marshlands in 878, which Luisella Simpson (1989, 397–8) has shown to have been compiled c. 945, rather than being the eleventh-century interpola-

³ For discussion of the use of artistic motifs in this manner by new-comers at a different date, see Reilly 1997.

tion once thought. This tradition was created in the context of the attempts by Alfred's successors to extend their rule over northern England, in which the support of a prominent saint like Cuthbert was crucial. The interest of the community in forging links with the West Saxons may have developed following the successes of Ragnald at the expense of the community, and his subsequent alliance with the Scots, which left them in an uncomfortable position (Morris 1981; Simpson 1989, 405). In 934 Athelstan made lavish gifts to the community, but West Saxon authority in the North was lost after Athelstan's death, although regained under his successor, Edmund, in 944. Shortly afterwards Edmund visited the community and granted privileges in order to gain its support, and it may have been then that the passage about Alfred was added to the *Historia*, as the community helped the house of Wessex to legitimize its rule. Indeed, in one passage St Cuthbert assures Alfred of his, and his descendants', future rulership over all Britain (Simpson 1989, 400). In other words, it was the political circumstances of the second quarter of the tenth century that gave rise to this passage which extended back in time the West Saxon connection with Northumbria (Simpson 1989, 405–11). The demands of living in the present often encourage a very selective, and sometimes greatly invented, remembrance of the past.

The tenth century witnessed important developments in ecclesiastical fortunes in the Danelaw, as churches were exploited by the secular aristocracy. Although the details are largely lost to us, the acquisition of ecclesiastical land by secular lords must have occurred, to judge from the paucity of ecclesiastical land according to Domesday Book in comparison with other parts of the country (Blair 1985, 108–13). Indeed, it may be that one reason why the monastic revival was unsuccessful in much of the Danelaw was the lack of royal land with which churches could be endowed (Dumville 1992c, 161). Direct assaults on churches are also recorded, most famously Eadred's attack on Ripon in 948, which ironically was almost certainly the result of the success of northern ecclesiastics in coming to terms with Scandinavian settlers, as it seems to have been a punitive measure following Archbishop Wulfstan's change of allegiance to Erik Bloodaxe (ASC s.a. 948). A further attack on the fortunes of churches was the loss of their relics. The relics of St Oswald were taken from Bardney (Lincs) into Mercia in 909, and Alfred's daughter Æthelflaed may have been behind the transfer of the relics of St Ealhmund from Derby to Shrewsbury (Shrops), and those of St Werburgh from Hanbury (Staffs) to Chester (ASC B s.a. 909; Rollason 1982, 26–7; Thacker 1982, 203–4, 209–11). Although the pious motives of the house of Wessex should not be overlooked, there was clearly also political capital to be gained from the acquisition of relics. The transfer of cults was almost certainly, at least in part, related to the establishment of West Saxon *burhs* in western Mercia, serving the dual role of satisfying Mercian pride, through the retrieval of Mercian saints, and of establishing more firmly West Saxon control in Mercia (Rollason 1987, 95). The West Saxons also endowed newly acquired saints' relics on churches with which they had long been associated: according to William of Malmesbury, Glastonbury acquired the relics of many northern saints, including those of Hild of Whitby (Yorks), Ceolfrith of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, and Aidan of Lindisfarne (Hamilton 1870, 198; Rollason 1987, 95). In addition to the

recorded removal of relics, one wonders what happened to the relics undoubtedly associated with the remains of shrines discovered at, for example, Wirksworth (Derbs), South Kyme (Lincs) and Hovingham (Yorks) (Hadley 2000a, 228, 270–1). The loss of saints' relics had important implications for churches in the Danelaw, because they provided a focal point for pilgrimage and patronage, they conferred prestige, they were central to local pastoral work, and they were important to regional traditions and identities (Thacker 1992, 166–9; Rollason 1987, 91–5). Relics also had political currency and were used for sealing oaths, for taking into battle, and for legitimizing authority (Rollason 1987).

There is no doubt that churches suffered great depredations and that many ecclesiastics must have feared for their safety and for the survival of Christianity in the ninth and tenth centuries. However, many churches and ecclesiastics continued to play an important role in the societies of northern and eastern England during this time. Moreover, it is clear that much of the basic framework of ecclesiastical organization survived the Scandinavian settlement (Hadley 1996b; 2000a, 279; Barrow, this volume). Christianity, and its trappings, was an important element of the workings of lordship in northern and eastern England.

Burial Practices

The burial practices employed in the Danelaw in the later ninth and earlier tenth century also have something to reveal about the nature of lordship. However, as Guy Halsall demonstrates elsewhere in this volume, it is difficult to distinguish 'Scandinavian' burials from indigenous burials in the Danelaw, not least because of the variety of burial practices employed in both England and in the Scandinavian homelands in the ninth and tenth centuries (see also Hadley 2000a, 319–23; and forthcoming). Indeed, it may not be appropriate to think in terms of Scandinavian and English burials, and it may be more relevant to discuss elite and other burials. Following the Scandinavian settlements, a variety of burial strategies were employed in the Danelaw: this included inhumation with or without grave goods, and with or without stone or wooden coffins, both in churchyards and elsewhere; cremation; and burial within new or existing barrows. In addition, there may have been ritual hoards and votive offerings in rivers, if this is how we may interpret the number of weapons and other artefacts found in rivers, and such finds as the skeletons of animals, Scandinavian metalwork, and weapons excavated at Skerne (Lincs) (Phillips 1989, 169–70; Richards 1991, 116–17; Richards, Jecock, Richmond, and Tuck 1995; Halsall, this volume). While burial practices may have little to reveal about religious belief (which is what they have been traditionally used as evidence for: see, for discussion, Graham-Campbell 1986), they may reveal, as Halsall (this volume) suggests, something about the basis of lordship, if that is what the presence of such items as weapons, riding equipment, a sickle, and weighing-scales may be said to signify. Moreover, the very paucity of elaborate burials in the decades around 900 may be an indication that whatever social stress was marked by elaborate forms of burial display, it was short-lived (see also Hadley, forthcoming).

The corpus of stone sculpture indicates that whatever form of burial was adopted, commemoration with sculpture in a churchyard often accompanied it. Furthermore, the tenth century witnessed a proliferation of churches in some parts of the Danelaw, in particular Lincolnshire and East Anglia, which may have been connected to a variety of factors in those regions, including the comparatively fragmented estate structure, the relative absence of lords with large estates, the losses suffered by the mother churches of the region, and population growth (Hadley 1996b, 123–4; Barrow, this volume). These churches appear usually to have had their own graveyards from their foundation (Barrow 1992), and this may suggest that lords in some regions of the Danelaw, presumably as a result of both their social competitiveness (Williamson 1993, 158) and the decline of the importance of many mother churches, chose to express themselves in death through their own churches. As David Stocker argues elsewhere in this volume, settlements with a multiplicity of tenth-century stone monuments may have been trading settlements, with an unusually large elite, including, presumably, many incomers. This corresponds with the case made above (see also Halsall, this volume) that in situations of social stress or increased social competition for resources and authority forms of burial display and commemoration may become more elaborate and visible. If anything, then, and perhaps ironically given their reputation, the Scandinavian settlements may have encouraged burial and funerary display in churchyards (Hadley 2000b, 212–15).

While the Scandinavian settlers may sometimes have attempted to assert their differences from the indigenous populations and their sense of group identity through their burial practices, it is also apparent that many settlers quickly adapted themselves to indigenous burial practices and used existing sites for burial. It may be true that the Scandinavians who were almost certainly buried under barrows at Heath Wood, Ingleby (Derbs) were indicating ‘instability and insecurity of some sort’ and making ‘a statement of religious, political and military affiliation in unfamiliar and inhospitable surroundings’, and making the most overt statement of ‘Scandinavianess’ found in the Danelaw (Richards, Jecock, Richmond, and Tuck 1995, 66), but, if so, they were unusual in doing so.

‘The name is Bóndi . . .’: Personal Names in the Danelaw

Naming strategies appear to have been another means by which lords secured their authority in northern and eastern England in the ninth and tenth centuries, and names appear to have been as capable of manipulation as were documents, burial practices, and material culture. It is also likely that the adoption of particular personal names was part of the means by which the settlers and the indigenous populations became acculturated to each other. It has long been recognized that the Scandinavian settlements of the later ninth and tenth centuries left their mark on the personal names of England, and that this influence lasted until the thirteenth century by which time both Old Norse and Old English names had been largely replaced by the continental names introduced by the Normans (Von Feilitzen 1937; Whitelock 1937–45b; Ekwall 1937–45; Fellows-Jensen 1968; 1972; Clark 1985; Insley 1979; Smart 1986). Yet personal names remain the most

under-explored evidence for the Scandinavian impact on England. Although far more time and energy has been expended on the interpretation of place-names, personal names offer, potentially, a much more nuanced picture of the impact of Scandinavian settlement and of social attitudes. Place-names are communal and generally slow to change, and it is rare for more than one name (as opposed to variant forms of a name) to survive for any given place; by contrast, the inhabitants of even a single place possessed scores, hundreds, even thousands of names during, say, the ninth to the twelfth centuries. Moreover, it is often much easier to tell by whom and in what circumstances a personal name was given; personal name distributions change much more rapidly than do those of place-names, and they represent a complex range of social attitudes and actions, including adherence to family tradition, copying of fashion, political motivation to mimic peers or the more prominent members of society, responses to conquest and changes in lordship, and so on (Clark 1982, 51). It is important to remember that personal names are not simply functional (a means of identifying someone), nor is their significance limited to their etymology, but rather they have a meaning that is primarily social (Clark 1991, 26). Thus, we need to look to the social context in which names were given and used in order to understand their significance.

The most famous example of the impact of Anglo-Scandinavian relations on naming-patterns concerns Guthrum, the leader of a Viking army who was sponsored at baptism by King Alfred of Wessex in 878, and who adopted the baptismal name of Æthelstan (Asser, c. 56; ASC s.a. 878). He then used this name when he subsequently took control in East Anglia, and where he minted coins which bore his baptismal name (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 318–19). In this instance it may have been the associations of the name that were significant—it was a reminder of his baptism, and it signified the peace treaty he had made with Alfred and his submission to that king. It was also a name appropriate to a ruler who intended to establish himself in the mould of an Anglo-Saxon king, albeit one with West Saxon rather than East Anglian associations (although, of course, Guthrum had, as yet, no specific connection with East Anglia at the time he acquired his new name). The fact that Æthelstan was the name of Alfred's deceased eldest brother may also have been significant (Asser, c. 6; Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 13, 231–2); this was not any West Saxon name, this was a royal name, and one that Alfred may have intended to confirm the peace he had made with Guthrum, and the personal but formal arrangement that standing sponsor to an individual at baptism represented. One wonders whether it would be too fanciful to suggest that Æthelstan was deliberately chosen for the baptismal name of Guthrum because of the associations of the earlier Æthelstan with the eastern part of the West Saxon domains (roughly Sussex, Surrey, Kent, and Essex), which he had ruled under his father, King Æthelwulf (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 231–2). This was a region which in the later ninth century may have been a priority for Alfred to secure, and eastern England also presented the possibility for further expansion following the death of the East Anglian king, Edmund, in 870 (ASC s.a. 870; see also Kershaw, this volume).

Other ninth- and early tenth-century Scandinavian rulers did not, as far as we know, adopt Anglo-Saxon names. Nonetheless, their names were commonly presented in an Anglo-Saxon form. For example, the names of successive kings of York were inscribed on their coins using the Roman alphabet (Dolley 1978), rather than the runic script which was the written form used in Scandinavia, although largely used on other media, such as standing stones and wooden implements (Graham-Campbell 1994, 100–103). The issuing of coinage was an important marker of royal status in Anglo-Saxon England, and the minting of coins in northern and eastern England, either by or on behalf of successive Scandinavian kings indicates that these kings drew on indigenous forms of rulership in order to establish their authority. The presentation of their names in Latin on coins served to exhibit successive Scandinavian rulers and kings in the mould of Christian, Anglo-Saxon kings. As such, it may be placed alongside their alliances with ecclesiastics and indigenous lords, the commissioning of stone sculpture, and their reliance on ecclesiastical support as evidence for the utilization of indigenous modes of rule (Hadley 1997, 93–5). Moreover, the very writing system a society adopts can be as important as the content in determining the ways in which text and inscriptions were understood, and it has much to reveal about the ways in which members of that society perceive themselves and the ways in which they want to present themselves (Hines 1995, 57–8). Languages do not simply arise and exist because they have to, but also because people want to speak and to communicate, both orally and in written form, in particular ways. Language may be as much an ‘act of identity’ as, for example, wearing a particular type of brooch, and as such was susceptible to manipulation (Hines 1995, 58). The Scandinavian lords presumably, thus, wished to present themselves in indigenous style rather than employing the written forms of their homelands.

It is inadvisable to use the personal names of individuals in the Danelaw as a guide to descent, or to the ultimate origins of any given individual. It is not uncommon for the same family to have some members who bore Old English names and others with Scandinavian names, a pattern that is found among the names of both the same and different generations within given families. For example, four brothers who held land in Beesby and Newton le Wold (Lincs), according to Domesday Book (DB, 347c), have the names Oune (Scandinavian), Ingemund (probably Scandinavian), Edric (English), and Eculf (probably English). Among their contemporaries at Lincoln were two brothers called Ulbert (probably derived from Old English *Wulfbeorht*) and Ulf (Scandinavian *Úlfr*) (DB, 336a; Ekwall 1937–45, 23). Other land-holders in Lincolnshire included the English-named Godric and Æthelstan whose fathers, Toruert and Godran, bore Old Norse names, and Ælfsige whose son bore the Old Norse name Toli (DB, 337a; Ekwall 1937–45, 23). It seems plausible to explain this as the result of the two-way exchange of names. The adoption of Scandinavian personal names by the indigenous population may have been in part because the settlers simply started a new fashion in nomenclature, and in part because the political ascendancy of the settlers during parts of the tenth century may have encouraged people to align themselves or, strictly, their children, self-consciously with their new overlords (Clark 1979; Williams 1995, 206–7). The adoption

of Old English names by the settlers may have been attributable to the same factors, although, perhaps, on a different time-scale.

It is interesting to note that although many families, certainly by the eleventh century and probably much earlier, chose a mixture of both Old English and Scandinavian personal names for their members, it is very rare for individuals to bear names which incorporate both an Old English and an Old Norse element (for some examples, see Clark 1982, 55). This is in marked contrast to the names of places where it is not uncommon to find names combining an Old English and an Old Norse element. One reason for the contrast between personal names and place-names may be the circumstances in which the names were coined. The place-names that eventually entered the written record had often emerged out of decades or centuries of local, common usage, whereas personal names were, presumably, normally chosen at one moment, so the likelihood of 'hybrid' forms being created may have been less, since name-givers would have, at least for the first coinings of a name, had to make a conscious decision to create a new name. Naming appears to have proceeded by reference both to familiar names and to newly encountered names. Where variation was desired, this seems to have been exercised through bestowing names of divergent origins and types on different members of a family, rather than through the 'hybridization' of names.

It is possible that the dissemination of Scandinavian personal names through the society of the Danelaw and the adoption of Old English names by the settlers did not simply proceed as new members of society were born, or baptised. The re-naming of adults ought not to be ruled out. We know that this happened in the case of Guthrum/Æthelstan, and analogy with the Norman Conquest shows that the arrival of a new authority in a region might lead to re-naming: for example, in the early 1130s the future St Bartholomew of Farne, who had been baptised with the Scandinavian name Tósti, was driven to adopt the more up-to-date name William by the taunts of his playmates (Clark 1987, 8). Marriage may also have been an occasion which lead to re-naming, particularly for women. The two best known examples of later Anglo-Saxon women who acquired new names upon their marriage concern the wives of Æthelred II and Henry I. Æthelred II married Emma, the daughter of the Duke of Normandy, who adopted Ælfgifu as her English name, and in 1100 Henry I married Edith, 'of the true royal line of England', who promptly became known by the Norman name Mathilda (Williams 1995, 200; ASC s.a. 1100). One reason why particular names filtered down through the social scale may have been their adoption by the local elite, since they would have been names that trailed 'clouds of prestige' (Clark 1987, 17).

Of the numerous Old Norse personal names recorded in documents of the tenth and eleventh centuries, there are many names that are rather different from names found in Scandinavia. It appears that in the Danelaw both the indigenous population and the incomers used not only existing Scandinavian names but also created new names, out of the individual elements of compound names. There is, for example, a much greater variety of compound names formed with *-brandr*, *-grímr*, *-hildr*, *-steinn* and *-úlfr* in the Danelaw than is found in Scandinavia (Fellows-Jensen 1994a, 258–9). If the individuals who bore these names considered them to be Scandinavian names, and we cannot be

sure that they did, then they were Scandinavian names with a difference. The form of the Scandinavian names found in the Danelaw suggests that once the settlers had left their home environment and been freed from the restrictions imposed by inherited naming principles they seemingly became more adventurous in their choices of names (Fellows-Jensen 1994a, 262). In this respect, personal names followed a similar pattern to forms of material culture created and adopted in the Danelaw. Many artefacts, including stone sculpture, coins, jewellery, and so on incorporate ornamentation that, while it owes something to Scandinavian influence, is very different from that found in Scandinavia itself (see above). Clearly, Scandinavian culture, in its various guises, was not transplanted to England in an undiluted or unaltered form, and the transformation seems to have come about in the context of contact with indigenous culture (see also Richards, this volume).

The percentage of Scandinavian names among the personal names of women in northern and eastern England was much lower in the eleventh and twelfth centuries than among the names of men (Clark 1979). This may be explained by fewer female than male settlers, which resulted in the introduction of far fewer female names, and hence female naming models, into England. A number of Scandinavian female names appear to have enjoyed a short-lived popularity in northern and eastern England. For example, of the fifty-seven Scandinavian place-names recorded by Domesday Book which have female names as their first element, around a half contain personal names that are not recorded anywhere else, suggesting that the names went out of use by at least the eleventh century (Jesch 1991, 78). However, a significant number of Scandinavian women may have settled in England, since it is only in unusual circumstances (such as widowhood or being the sole surviving heir) that women inherited land and held on to it long enough for their names to have become associated with the land (Jesch 1991, 78). There is some documentary evidence to suggest that the earliest raiders and settlers brought their wives and children with them. For example, in 893 the Viking fortress at Benfleet (Essex) was captured by an English force, including ‘both goods, and women and also children’, following which ‘the *wif* (? woman/wife) and two sons’ of their leader Hæsten were taken to King Alfred, and in 895 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle observes that ‘the Danes had placed their women in safety in East Anglia’ (ASC s.a. 893, 895). On the other hand, there is also some evidence to suggest that the settlers sometimes married into indigenous families, perhaps for political or pragmatic reasons to secure their claims to land. For example, in 926 Sihtric, the Hiberno-Norse King of York, married a sister of King Athelstan of Wessex, and at a later date Cnut married Emma, the widow of his predecessor, Æthelred II (ASC s.a. 926, 1017). It may be that marriage strategies were one of the most significant means by which the Scandinavian settlers, the majority of whom appear on available evidence to have been men, secured their position and authority in England. There may be parallels to be drawn with the situation following both Cnut’s conquest, when the enforced marriage of widows was a source of complaint (EHD, no. 50, cc. 73–4; Williams 1995, 12; Chibnall 1969–81, II, 268–9), and the Norman Conquest. Indeed, such strategies have much in common with the ways in which the Scandinavian raiders and settlers often involved themselves

in internecine warfare and family rivalries (see above)—an important means by which the Scandinavians integrated themselves into English society was by presenting themselves as yet another factor in the complex socio-political world of the places where they went.

Hamlet and the Peasants of Denmark

This chapter has not sought to contribute to the tired debates about the scale of the Scandinavian settlement, not least because it is not clear that the evidence it has discussed provides any evidence for that debate. The place-name and other linguistic evidence may provide a different picture, although, I remain to be convinced that there is a straightforward correlation between the scale of the settlement and linguistic impact.⁴ In fact, in some ways we can set this issue aside if we stop to question what the likely unity of the Scandinavians, lords and peasants, might have been. Discussion of the Scandinavian settlement has commonly been based on the assumption that the Scandinavian settlers had some sort of common identity and purpose (discussed in Hadley 1997, 86–8). This is unlikely, and we should not be misled by the chroniclers who lumped together the raiders under the title ‘Danes’ or ‘Northmen’ (Nelson 1997, 35). Viking armies were composed of diverse groups of people, as they attracted followers from the areas where they raided, and they were prone to change their aims as the military and political circumstances in which they found themselves changed (Lund 1989). Settlement created new challenges and opportunities, and the Scandinavian leaders consistently revealed themselves willing to adopt existing forms of lordship in the regions where they settled. What seems to be crucial in determining the impact of the settlers was the exercise of lordship rather than the creation or protection of a Scandinavian set of interests.

Of course, some of the Scandinavian settlers may have wished to maintain some form of ‘Scandinavian’ identity, but in doing so they did not simply draw on the culture from which they had come, and they borrowed much from the indigenous cultures of England and Britain. There was also much that was new, and, although we often label it as Danish or Scandinavian, we have to remember that there are often no direct antecedents in Scandinavia—not just questions of social status, but also issues relating to regional concerns may have become more pressing than ‘Scandinavianess’. Insufficient attention has been paid to the divergent interests among the Scandinavian settlers: their leaders quickly adapted themselves to indigenous modes of authority and formed allegiances with indigenous rulers, which is where their interests surely lay, rather than with peasant immigrants (Hadley 1997, 87–8, 95).

⁴ See Hines (1991; 1995) for discussion of fundamental questions concerning social contact and language use and manipulation, although I recognize that there may be many linguistic issues that need to be addressed before we can pursue that route (see Barnes 1993). For a different view, see Townend, this volume.

Conclusions

Students of the Scandinavian impact on England have for too long had too little to say about the leaders of the settlers and about the ways in which they established their authority (Wormald 1982a, 143–4). One notable attempt to do so by Alfred Smyth (1975; 1977; 1978) was regarded with scepticism and, in some quarters, with downright hostility, largely because of his use of late and unreliable evidence (for a review see Wormald 1982a, 141–4). This chapter has discussed the ways in which we may use a variety of types of evidence to discuss lordship in the Danelaw, both that of the Scandinavians and of the indigenous lords. For much of the first half of the tenth century it is difficult to say who were the conquerors and who were the conquered in the politically complex circumstances which prevailed in the Danelaw. Moreover, one of the interested parties in the areas of Scandinavian settlement, the house of Wessex, had hijacked Englishness for its own purposes (Wormald 1994), and this may have been one reason why aspects of Scandinavian culture were so readily adopted in northern and eastern England by the indigenous populations, as part, among other things, of a process of marking out the political and cultural distinctiveness of the region (see also Innes, this volume).

It is not the intention of this chapter to suggest that the scale of the Scandinavian settlement was not a significant feature of its impact, but rather that much of the evidence over which there has been considerable debate does not have much to reveal about the scale of the settlement, although it does have much to reveal about the ways in which lords from different backgrounds and with very different intentions competed for authority in northern and eastern England in the ninth and tenth centuries.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASC Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Whitelock, D., with Douglas, D.C. and Tucker, S.I., trans, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 1961, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- Asser Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, in Keynes, S. and Lapidge, M., trans and eds, *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*, Harmondsworth: Penguin
- DB Domesday Book, in Morgan, P. and Thorn, C., eds, *Domesday Book, 31 Lincolnshire*, 2 vols, 1986, Chichester: Phillimore
- EHD *English Historical Documents I, c. 500–1042*, Whitelock, D. trans. and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode

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Part 3. The Scandinavian Settlement and the Church

Conversion and Assimilation

LESLEY ABRAMS

When, in the last third of the ninth century, large areas of Anglo-Saxon England came under Danish political control, the settlement that followed brought together people of different faiths. It is generally assumed that as part of the subsequent process of assimilation, Scandinavian pagans quickly became Anglo-Scandinavian Christians,¹ although evidence of the process is notably absent. Danish East Anglia and Mercia (though not necessarily Lincolnshire) had submitted to Edward the Elder by 917–18, while Northumbrian resistance under a Hiberno-Scandinavian dynasty continued until the 950s. By the time the West Saxon kings extended their hegemony by stages to include the different parts of the Danelaw, therefore, those regions had experienced from forty to almost ninety years of Scandinavian rule. This period provides my first point of focus: what was involved when an incoming population with different religious beliefs settled in the midst of a Christian society—especially when that incoming group was politically in charge? And what was the effect on the existing religious culture of the subsequent conquest of Scandinavian-held territories by the Anglo-Saxons? There may be no answers to these questions, given the

¹ There is no entirely satisfactory term available to denote the followers of traditional pre-Christian religions: ‘pagan’ (or ‘heathen’) is loaded with pejorative connotations and implies a uniformity of practice and belief which is doubtless misleading (Wood 1995, 253, 273–7); ‘non-Christian’ has the disadvantage of being a negative definition, and cumbersome as well. In the absence of a better word, I shall retain ‘pagan’, but as a useful label rather than a judgement (on its use as the latter in the Viking Age, see Page 1987).

poor survival of evidence, but something may be achieved by considering the nature and mechanics of conversion, how its progress can be judged, the requirements of right Christian living, and the position of the Church in the special circumstances of the Danelaw.²

The Nature of Conversion

Before considering the specifics of the Danelaw, a preliminary distinction between short-term and long-term change should be noted. Many ecclesiastical historians (not to mention medieval churchmen) have recognised that the mass baptism of pagans was not enough to create a fully fledged Christian society. A lingering paganism followed the conversion even of populations that embraced the faith with enthusiasm (Morris 1989, 46–92, especially 91–2; Fletcher 1997, 240–1, 253–71). It is useful, therefore, to distinguish between the official acceptance of Christianity and the far slower process whereby society took the new religion fully on board. Terminology used to distinguish these two is not consistent in either scholarly or popular usage, but for my purposes I shall use ‘conversion’ to denote the former—the primary stage which included consent to change and the first manifestations of the new order—and ‘Christianization’ to refer to the latter—the process whereby the beliefs and practices of the adopted religion were fully absorbed by society. Neither of these is simple to define or easy to measure. By focusing more specifically on the former, I shall of necessity be looking most at the early stages of the Danelaw, rather than considering the longer term. Discussion of the Christianization of the Scandinavian areas of England would take the enquiry into the later stages of the tenth century and on into the eleventh, when the situation was complicated by a further influx of settlers under the leadership of Cnut, who gained the English throne in 1016. Cnut himself was a third-generation (and self-publicizing) Christian (Lawson 1993, 117–60; Keynes 1996, 34–9), although there were apparently among his (and, earlier, his father’s) followers an uncertain number of men who had not yet converted (Blair and Crawford 1997). By the time Cnut’s conquest prompted another wave of emigration from the northern homelands, however, we are far removed from the initial encounter between settling Scandinavian pagans and settled Anglo-Saxon Christians, upon which I should like this discussion to focus.

² The term ‘Danelaw’ (*on Dena lage*) first appears in the ‘Laws of Edward and Guthrum’, c. 7.2 (Liebermann 1903–16, I, 128–35; Attenborough 1922, 102–6) and the sixth law-code of Æthelred, c. 37 (Liebermann 1903–16, I, 246–59; Robertson 1925, 102; EHD, no. 44). The date of the former is c. 1002x1008 (Whitelock 1941; Wormald 1999, 389–91), the latter after 1008 but before 1018x1021 (Robertson 1925, 49; Wormald 1999, 332–5). I shall use the term here to refer to the Scandinavian areas of England from the beginning of settlement. For useful terminology for the parts of the Danelaw, see Hart 1992, 3–24; on its definition, see Abrams, forthcoming, b.

In a recent study, Richard Fletcher (1997, 2) characterized what Christianity offered the early medieval convert as a 'cultural package'. He portrayed the conversion of medieval Europe to Christianity as the means whereby the gifts of the Roman Empire were transferred to a succession of legatees. These gifts included:

Literacy, and books, and the Latin language [. . .]; Roman notions about law, authority, property and government; the habits of living in towns and using coin for exchange; Mediterranean tastes in food, drink, and costume; new architectural and artistic conventions.

The Christianity portrayed here is material, procedural, social: 'a new way of doing things' (Fletcher 1997, 515). This perception offers a striking contrast to a work of a previous generation, A.D. Nock's *Conversion: the old and the new in religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, which represented Christianity as a tool for making sense of the world and understanding the unseen: Nock (1933, 7) described conversion as a process involving 'the reorientation of the soul'. Although Fletcher and Nock dealt with significantly different historical periods, the gulf between them may also mark the progress of *fin de siècle* cynicism concerning religion's political dimension. Nevertheless, while the emphasis now given to secular external forces by scholars such as Fletcher seems to reflect a lack of interest among historians in the spiritual life of the individual, the position may perhaps be justified to some extent by the suggestion that there was in the early Middle Ages less of a role for the individual than both in late Roman and in current conceptions and manifestations of religious conversion.

As far as we can judge from the available sources, although the process of conversion varied and followed different courses at different times and places, religious affiliation in the early Middle Ages was not (or not entirely) a question of individual choice, nor of reasoned belief about life, the universe, and other such metaphysical matters. Religion (and therefore conversion) was not simply a personal concern, but an element of a group's identity—initially an aspect of authority and allegiance, rather than spiritual conviction. This perspective doubtless distorts the situation by removing the individual and the question of personal belief from the picture, and the degree of distortion is impossible to assess. But if we keep in mind that religion was as much about conduct (what you did, and where, and with whom) as about belief, it seems reasonable to emphasise this communal aspect of religion as an element of group identity at the expense of the admittedly and unfortunately less visible components of personal interpretation and conviction. It is also worth noting that this view rests to a great extent on a history of Christianity based on sources produced by professional churchmen, whose chosen paradigm of religious change was that of the group rather than the individual.³ Furthermore, the history of western Europe in the ninth and tenth

³ With the exception of saints and kings, although the latter appear principally in their role as leaders of peoples.

centuries offers numerous instances of Viking armies adopting, as part of the package of submission, the religion of lay leaders whose secular authority they accepted. King Alfred and the thirty 'best men' of Guthrum's army are but one example (Asser, c. 56; Charles-Edwards 1998, 47–59; Kershaw, this volume). The circumstances of these political conversions have given rise to cynical estimates (both contemporary and retrospective) of their sincerity. However, it may be worth wondering whether this cynicism is always appropriate, bearing in mind the significant semi-sacral status attributed to lay chieftains in the Scandinavian homelands (McTurk 1974–7; Wormald 1982, 145). To put it another way, perhaps conversion involved leaders, while Christianization was about the people they led.

Models of Conversion

The early Middle Ages witnessed many conversions. Study of these has developed two principal models for the way religious change took place, in addition to conversion as diplomatic event. The first, that of missionary enterprise, is the most familiar and well documented: Augustine in England from 597, Boniface on the continent in the eighth century, Anskar in Scandinavia in the ninth, and so on (Fletcher 1997). These missions were aimed at kings, and the imposition of Christianity on the people at large was in many cases a demonstration of political power by the new royal converts. The modern image of missionaries emphasises their work on the personal level, convincing individuals, but most missionaries of the early Middle Ages aimed first at royal courts and exemplified a 'top down' approach: persuade the leaders and they would in turn persuade their people. This method naturally highlights the political agenda at the expense of a spiritual one.

There is no surviving evidence of a missionary enterprise in Scandinavian England. We know of a handful of ninth-century diplomatic conversions: Guthrum and his followers (ASC s.a. 878), Hæsten's wife and children (ASC s.a. 893), and perhaps Guthred, elected King of the Danish army in Northumbria.⁴ Hints of other activity can be collected (see Barrow, this volume; and Abrams forthcoming, a), but if any church within or outside Wessex took an active role in the evangelization of any Scandinavian group in the ninth or early tenth century, its role remains unremembered. It may seem odd that no tradition of mission—then or later—survives, but silence similarly characterizes the great task, also undertaken by English churchmen (among others), of the evangelization of Scandinavia itself in the tenth and eleventh centuries (Sawyer, Sawyer, and Wood 1987; Abrams 1995).

⁴ According to the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Arnold 1882–5, I, 203; EHD, no. 6, c. 13) the saint instructed the leaders of his community to select Guthred and make him king; the resulting ceremony combined Christian and pagan elements in its ritual (see Aird, forthcoming).

A second model of conversion relies on the idea of 'influence' and 'infiltration'. Christianity, according to this thinking, was spread by 'exposure'. This concept lies behind some interpretations of the origins of Christianity in Scandinavia (Gräslund 1987; Hernæs 1994 and n.d.) or Richard Fletcher's suggestion (1997, 416, also 380) that '*among Scandinavian settlers abroad* [his italics] conversion was something that "just happened" in the process of assimilation into a host culture'. Clearly, a consideration of 'influence' must bring us back to the personal level, as it rests on contact between individuals, in contexts such as marriage and commercial dealings. It represents conversion largely as a passive experience—a gradual coming-to-terms with the new. Christianity, however, is an institutional religion and an institutional phenomenon. It does not function solely on the personal level of belief and conviction and private practice. All of that—important though it may have been—existed within a larger structure, and it is difficult to see how Christianity could take root among pagans *without* that structure: how were converts to be baptised, for example, without priests, and churches consecrated without bishops? 'Passive acceptance' (Fellows Jensen 1975, 205) or simply admiring your Christian neighbours and believing new things surely could not have been enough. Baptism, instruction, and a place to go to fulfill the conditions of worship were elementary aspects of Christian living. This means that priests and churches would be essential, and that Christianity could not extend itself into the personal sphere of family and community life without an institutional existence in at least this form. The question for the Danelaw, therefore, is surely not whether Scandinavians mingled with and were influenced by Anglo-Saxon Christians, but whether there were priests and churches in operation that could carry out the necessary functions for a newly Christian population (and their English Christian neighbours). The answer is clearly yes. But the important question remains when (and where).

Pagans and Christians in the Early Danelaw

After a brief initial exploitation of native sub-rulers, Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia were ruled by their own independent kings and *jarls*, and it seems logical to believe contemporary accusations that they were pagan on arrival. The Scandinavian homelands, although exposed to Christianity through merchants and missionaries throughout the ninth century, had resisted the appeal of the foreigners' religion, and continued to do so until the conversion of kings intent on eliminating local rivals and creating centralized national powers from the second half of the tenth century (Sawyer, Sawyer, and Wood 1987; Abrams 1995). We are imperfectly informed about the rites practised by the Scandinavians, but the frequent association of worship and place in traditional religion might raise the question of whether such practices (and associated beliefs?) could have survived physical uprooting and transfer to new ground. Expatriation probably did affect the Scandinavians' cult, but whatever change it caused need not have meant a weakening of their identity as pagans (Smyth 1977, 222; Campbell 1982, 148–9; Wormald 1982, 138–41). Some of the Viking leaders of the Great Army had had careers that ranged across the Irish Sea, but there is no conclusive evidence that

significant progress, if any, in converting the Scandinavians had been achieved in Ireland before the 940s (Abrams 1998).⁵ We can therefore safely imagine that the Scandinavian conquests of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms brought pagan invaders into immediate relationship with the churches and churchmen of those kingdoms. This encounter could have had several different outcomes, one of them being the expulsion or flight of important ecclesiastics and the obliteration of the Church; alternatively, some kind of accord could have been achieved between the Church and the incoming elite. This could have ranged from complete cooperation (including the immediate adoption of Christianity by the new guard) to a less accommodating commitment (as in the alliance, in the 940s, between the apparently pagan king Olaf Guthfrithsson and Wulfstan, Archbishop of York).

There is no doubt that conversion to Christianity did occur amongst the pagan population of the Danelaw. By the end of the tenth century we can illustrate this conversion with sculpture (which extended the Anglian habit of Christian stone sculpture in a style imported from Scandinavia), a re-established national Church, Scandinavian ecclesiastical patrons (Whitelock 1937–45), and the careers of Anglo-Scandinavian churchmen such as Oda, Bishop of Ramsbury (c. 909x927–941) and Archbishop of Canterbury (941–958) (Dumville 1992, 175–6 and 183–4; Barrow, this volume). I would, however, like to draw attention to some of the difficulties involved in understanding how, and when, this was achieved. First among these are the problems of identifying pagans, counting converts, and putting a date on their conversion: how is this to be done in an age before census-taking?

Relevant contemporary written evidence is sparse, consisting mainly of passing references to *pagani* in Asser, the narrative of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, or royal diplomas (such as S396 (B659) and S397 (B658)).⁶ In the absence of more informative written sources, archaeological evidence takes on a greater role. Burials are inspected for signs of continuing paganism and/or of transfer to a new rite (see Halsall, this volume). In some parts of England, sculpture plays a major role (Stocker, and Sidebottom, this volume), indicating as it does through iconography or design (monumental crosses, for example) a move to Christianity (and, possibly, attitudes to its interpretation; see Margeson 1983, 104–5). Similarly, objects such as amulets (Thor's hammers, boars' teeth) or crucifixes in graves or as casual finds are taken to identify religious allegiance, as does iconography (valkyries, mythological scenes) on dress-ornaments (Thomas, this volume). Scandinavian elements in place-names occasionally suggest (pagan) cult practice (Williamson 1993, 141; Rackham 1986, 79;

⁵ The first King of Dublin known to have been a Christian was Olaf Cuaran, and according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle he was baptised in England, in 943, as part of a political arrangement with King Edmund. The bishopric of Dublin—the institutional Church for the Scandinavian kingdom—was not established until the early eleventh century, some eighty years after the baptism of Olaf, who himself belonged to the fourth generation of Scandinavians in Ireland.

⁶ These charters are dated 926, but the relevant phrases look back to a time before 911.

Smith 1956, II, 27–8, under *lundr*) or Christian sites (Smith 1956, I, 114, under *cros*); the adoption of personal names incorporating names of pagan deities is seen as signalling their decline as a religious force (Stenton 1970, 311; Fellows-Jensen 1995, 30). The proliferation of churches indicates widespread Christian observance (Hadley 1996, 124–8; Barrow, this volume; see also Williamson 1993, 154–61). Continuity of church sites and saints' cults is taken to signal continuing Christian activity in that place, and therefore at least a tolerance, if not adoption, of Christianity by the incoming population (Morris 1989, 165; Blair 1995, 199–203; Stocker, this volume). Saints' cults are only sparsely documented, however, and a cult in place in the ninth and again in the mid-tenth century need not have been there continuously throughout. Outside Northumbria, the forty years of Scandinavian rule would not necessarily have been long enough to obliterate memory of site and cult; nor would their continuity during the years of Scandinavian independence necessarily mean that Scandinavians took part. Most problematic of all, the difficulty of dating the developments or artefacts mentioned above makes them unreliable tools and awkward to deploy in argument, especially with respect to locating them before or after Edward the Elder's destruction of independent Scandinavian power south of the Humber. The interpretation of this material always requires subtlety (as discussed in several chapters in this volume). The issue of whether burial in churchyards is necessarily indicative of the conversion of those buried is but one example. The question of whether Christian iconography necessarily indicates Christians is another, as illustrated by the coinage of the early Danelaw (see below).

The fate of the Church in the First Viking Age—and more specifically the situation at episcopal level—is discussed elsewhere in this volume (see Barrow; also Stenton 1971, 433–8). There is therefore no need to detail here the evidence of disrupted and disappearing dioceses, which, supported by an absence of surviving charters and manuscripts from Danelaw regions (Campbell 1982, 147–9) and some discontinuity of ecclesiastical property (Campbell 1996, 14), has led to the conclusion that in some areas (and most emphatically south of the Humber) the Church could have been destroyed or at least suffered serious setbacks under the Scandinavians. Patrick Wormald (1982, 138–41) has remarked that the disruption of episcopal succession and the later reconfiguration of dioceses in areas of Scandinavian settlement suggest that bishops and sees were casualties, if not of Viking raids, then of Viking conquest and Scandinavian settlement. All kinds of qualifications can be (and have been) attached to these conclusions (Hadley 1996): the significant regional variations of pre-Viking-Age England must be taken into account; other contributing factors include the decline of the Church (for internal, not external, reasons), and the significant effect of the West Saxon conquests of the tenth century (Barrow 1994, 28–30; also this volume). Whatever the cause, it does seem, however, that during the period of Scandinavian independence and also for some time after the Anglo-Saxon conquest 'dioceses were either abandoned to paganism or the efforts of local priests, or else were administered from a safe distance' (Dumville 1992, 191). Despite the undeniable contribution of other factors, since we are told by contemporary sources that pagan armies conquered and settled in these parts, their role in the Church's decline must at least be considered, even if in the

end it cannot be isolated. Disappearance (temporary and permanent) and discontinuity may signal an aggressive paganism and hostility to Christianity, as Wormald (in Campbell 1982, 148–9; Wormald 1982, 138–41) remarked, but alternatively they could be evidence of more practical phenomena, such as (perhaps) the take-over of defensible sites for military purposes, or the use of church lands by Scandinavian kings and army leaders to reward their followers and fund their rule. The seizure of ecclesiastical land cannot be documented (with a few exceptions in Northumbria), but it would account for the ecclesiastical picture when sources reappear later in the century; if they lost their land, religious communities would also have lost rents, food supplies, and services, and would have had little chance of survival, except perhaps on a much reduced scale (Dumville 1992, 29–53, esp. 32–3).

The ‘disappearance’ of most dioceses in the Danelaw for long periods of time is acutely relevant to the issue of conversion, as without bishops there could be no new churches and priests, and without priests no baptisms, no religious instruction, and no burials. Support for the proposition that a perception of episcopal inactivity is not just a product of poor source survival, at least in the early years, comes from a letter (B573; EHD no. 227; datable to 891x896) from Pope Formosus to the bishops of the Anglo-Saxon Church, urging them to fill empty posts and remember their episcopal obligations. Formosus referred to the sprouting anew ‘of the abominable rites of the pagans’ and the ‘violation of the Christian faith’, without specifying where; scholars have taken his remarks to mean that bishops for the areas under Danish rule had not been supplied rapidly enough (Barrow 1994, 28–9). Formosus’s criticisms may also suggest that if non-diocesan bishops had been active in a Danelaw abandoned, through flight or death, by its diocesan leaders, their activities had not been deemed sufficient to the task. What burdens bishops might have had to bear when faced with Scandinavian converts can be seen in a slightly later letter (Zimmermann 1984–9, I, 65–7, no. 38), written between 914 and 922, from Pope John X (914–28) to Hervey, Archbishop of Rheims (900–22), entrusting to the archbishop the conversion of the Vikings there (Guillot 1981, 104–5; see below). Even if the lower clergy stayed in their churches after the Scandinavian settlement, unaffected by affairs at the elite level, the pool of priests in office in the 870s when the Vikings shared out the land in Northumbria, Mercia, and then East Anglia would not have lasted very long, if at all, into the tenth century without being replenished by new men. Where did they come from? In much of the Danelaw, ecclesiastical activity between 880 and 920 is invisible in the surviving sources (and the paucity of sources is to some extent itself suggestive of an inactive Church). In the 930s, charters’ witness-lists on occasion preserve the names of bishops who cannot be identified with any known see (S427 (B705/706), for example), but even minimal help of this sort for the last quarter of the ninth century and first quarter of the tenth is limited by the absence of charters from the Danelaw and the small number of contemporary Mercian and West Saxon diplomas. Were priests trained in ‘English England’ and deployed from there into Danelaw territory, possibly even Scandinavian converts like the young man ‘of pagan descent’ (*paganicae gentis*) seen by Asser at Athelney (Asser, c. 94)? The practice of hostage-exchange could account for the raising of some young Scandina-

vians as Christians in Wessex. Or was it possible for existing episcopal and monastic institutions and personnel to continue to operate under Scandinavian rule? York constitutes one (apparently feeble) example of continuity (Barrow, this volume), and St Cuthbert's community is another (seemingly more robust, at least politically) (Aird 1998, 29–44). But even in Northumbria pastoral activity is obscure and campaigns of evangelization imperceptible. Furthermore, elite clergy may have had undesirable associations, as far as Scandinavian rulers were concerned: episcopal consecrations presumably required the approval of the King of Wessex.⁷ This seems to have been a problem even once East Anglia, Mercia, and Northumbria were 'returned' to English rule under the West Saxons (Barrow 1994, 28–9). It is all the more difficult to see why, before their defeat, independent Scandinavian rulers would have welcomed representatives of (hostile) Wessex.⁸ Alternatively, the kings of Wessex may have been disinclined to deal with Scandinavian rulers on these terms and may have held back from offering Danish leaders the advantages which having their own bishops might bring (Barrow 1994, 28–9).

The Process of Conversion

Given the dearth of sources, it is not surprising that the conversion of the Scandinavian settlers is obscure. Some light may be thrown on the matter, however, by turning from questions of evidence to questions of practice, based on other better documented cases. It might also help to pause and consider what conversion actually involved. As mentioned above, some scholars have minimized the significance of conversion and have judged that the acceptance of baptism meant little to Vikings (and it is not difficult to find examples of those who failed to respect it).⁹ This argument has been extended to suggest that in general the effects of formal conversion were so superficial and external that they failed to impinge significantly on the nominal converts;¹⁰ these 'men on whom baptism sat lightly' (Angus 1965, 162) would not have worried much about local provisions for pastoral care. A variation on this theme is the attempt to close the gap between paganism and Christianity, arguing that the differences between the two

⁷ York's new archbishop in 900, Æthelbald, was consecrated in London (Campbell 1962, 50–2).

⁸ Guthrum in East Anglia (d. 890) is the obvious exception to this, having been sponsored at baptism by King Alfred.

⁹ Notker (*Gesta Karoli* II, 19; Haeferle 1962, 89–90; Thorpe 1969, 168–9) complained of Vikings in the early ninth century whom he characterized as having been repeatedly baptised at the imperial court out of greed, for example; see also the letter from Pope John X, below, concerning serial baptism in the diocese of Rheims.

¹⁰ Some would argue further that apart from royal courts and professional religious, the early medieval (and later) masses were pagan for centuries after the acceptance of Christianity (Fletcher 1997, 509). The persistence of pagan beliefs and of associated observance was not, however, inconsistent with a society also practising Christianity.

have been exaggerated (Binns 1963, 45). Similarly, stress is laid on Christianity's elastic qualities and its readiness to absorb new attributes to suit the occasion (Binns 1965, 182). Syncretism, properly speaking a union of significant elements from different religions (Foote 1984, 85–6), is often used more vaguely as a convenient label to describe the mix-and-match mentality portrayed in many accounts of conversion-period Christians. Syncretistic behaviour was not unique to the Viking Age: Nock (1933, 7) discussed 'adhesion', defined as 'the acceptance of new worships as useful supplements and not as substitutes'. This perspective as applied by modern scholars to Viking converts sees their Christianity as down-to-earth and practical, cheerfully ignoring the rules. Anecdotal evidence does indeed suggest that one of the most difficult messages of Christianity was its exclusivity.¹¹ This may not mean, however, that converts who failed to understand this message were insincere about their conversion. In colonial Africa, for example, '[converted] Christians continued to engage in practices labelled as non-Christian and religious by missionaries, without necessarily seeing them as representing a competing discourse' (Landau 1999, 11).

This raises an important issue. It is perhaps unwise to assume that Christianity and paganism were simply two versions of one thing—religion—which had the same range for both groups, if a different truth. It is unlikely that pagans and Christians of the ninth century would have had the same ideas about what constituted 'religion', and the transition from one to the other would consequently not have been as simple as replacing 'paganism' with 'Christianity'. Christian missions to Africa may provide a parallel: scholars have argued that Christianity and so-called 'African traditional religion' were not equivalent entities, with conversion achievable by merely substituting one for the other:

At the start of evangelistic activity, few Africans could possibly have grasped Christian ideas as a unitary package. Those ideas were representable only [...] in piecemeal fashion. Africans did not initially share the European idea that 'religion' was a discrete category of human activity (Landau 1999, 11).

¹¹ In the *Life of St Anskar* we hear of Danish merchants who were Christian while doing business in the continental market of Dorestad, but pagan when at home (Waitz 1884, 58; Robinson 1921, 93–4); see also the letter from Pope John X, below. Numerous ecclesiastics complained of 'relapses': see, for example, the tenth-century Saxon churchman Widukind of Corvey, who observed that 'the Danes [...] continue to venerate idols according to heathen custom' despite having accepted Christianity (*Res gestae Saxonicae* III, 65; Lohmann and Hirsch 1935, 140). Archbishop Fulk, in a letter to Charles III in c. 885, cited in Flodoard's *Historia Remensis ecclesiae* (IV, 5), admitted that apostasy was not uncommon in his see of Rheims: 'multi Christianam deserentes religionem paganorum se societati coniunxerant ac tuitioni subdiderant' ('many, abandoning the Christian religion, have joined themselves to the society of the pagans and have subjected themselves to their protection') (Wallace-Hadrill 1975, 227; Heller and Waitz 1881, 563).

This kind of distinction between what constituted religion for Christians and non-Christians may be to some extent behind ninth- and tenth-century tales of backsliding and the associated judgements of insincerity. Even serious Scandinavian converts may have seen no contradiction in maintaining customary behaviour which, in some cases, they had no reason to consider relevant to Christianity, or even relevant to 'religion', and thus implicated by the act of baptism. I certainly do not intend to suggest that neither backsliding nor wilful cynicism occurred among converts in the Viking Age. But images of bi-cultism—whether characterized as defiant, down-to-earth, or just plain ignorant—may not tell the whole story. The examples we have are cast in that mould by churchmen, generally with a critical agenda.

On the basis of early tenth-century evidence from the diocese of Rheims, however, Olivier Guillot (1981) has argued that not all churchmen were unimpressed by and disparaging about the Scandinavian converts; he detected in ecclesiastical correspondence a definition of conversion which involved not the achievement of a result, but the beginning of an evolution ('une approche vers la foi, et moins souvent [...] un résultat acquis, un passage catégorique de l'état de païen à celui de chrétien', 104).¹² Pope John X, for example, in his letter to the Archbishop of Rheims (Zimmermann 1984–9, I, 65–7, no. 38), could rejoice in the fact that the *gens normannorum*, thanks to divine clemency, were *ad fidem conversa* ('turned towards the faith'); he made this positive judgement even though he had been told that the converts violated Christian sacraments with repeated baptisms and continued to live like pagans. Guillot (1981, 105–9) has argued that Pope John, in recognizing these converts as *tyrones ad fidem* and *ad fidem rudes*—simple beginners in the faith, in other words—rather than condemning and rejecting them as apostates or relapsed pagans, demonstrated an enlightened and liberal interpretation of conversion as the beginning of a journey, in contrast to the expectation of immediate transformation by means of the act of baptism. On the other hand, baptism was thought to effect an ontological change which 'made' converts Christian, whatever their subsequent behaviour.¹³ With this realistic view of conversion as relative and imperfect even the explicit practice of indecent pagan games and abominable rites (*ludicrae uoluptates nefando ritu paganorum*) did not mean complete defeat. When Hervey, Archbishop of Rheims, reported that converts were killing Christians *more paganorum* ('in the manner of pagans'), butchering priests, and eating offerings sacrificed to their idols,¹⁴ the pope's surprisingly tolerant response implies that he

¹² 'An approach towards faith and less often [...] an achieved result or a categorical passage from the pagan state to the Christian one'.

¹³ By the *sacramentum fidei* ('sacrament of faith'), as baptism was called, faith was irrevocably implanted in the baptised person, even without their conscious assent (as was inevitably the case with infants). The sign of the cross left an invisible but indelible 'mark' on each of the christened, changing them forever (Van Engen 1991, 23–31).

¹⁴ 'Paganorum more christianos interfecerint, sacerdotes trucidauerint, atque simulacris immolantes idolotita comederint' (Guillot 1981, 110; Zimmermann 1984–9, I, 65–7, no. 38). I

nonetheless considered the Scandinavians to be progressing towards Christianization in their own fashion (Guillot 1981, 105). Such enlightened pragmatism (admittedly, from the safe distance of Rome) may speak volumes about how much (or how little) churchmen were initially able to achieve.

Baptism was nonetheless expected to influence an individual's behaviour. From the Church's point of view, it seems, active practice by the Christian faithful took precedence over understanding what it meant (Van Engen 1991, 36–47). Faith was articulated by practice, which was therefore not (as some commentators on Viking Age converts seem to have assumed) insignificant and without meaning. The Old Norse word for conversion, *siðaskipti*, literally means 'change of custom'. We have little contemporary insight into what people believed in the conversion period (although religious images such as Thor's hammers and crosses may represent the beliefs of their wearers) but we are better informed about what they did. Pope John's letter is supplemented by other correspondence and by legislation, homilies, and texts such as that issued to his priests by Theodulf of Orléans (794–821) (Dutton 1993, 94–105). Much of this evidence is in the form of prohibitions, listing proscribed, 'pagan', behaviour: in addition to giving up whatever practices had characterized pagan burial, Christians were urged to abandon sacrifices, the casting of lots, and interpretation of omens. It was presumably the hope that converts would (gradually?) replace these with Christian behaviour: reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, occasionally receiving communion, observing Lent, not working on Sunday, and performing penance. Even such minimal observance was surely not a casual change, with little impact on the individual's life. Church dues and tithes were probably exacted as well; although payment of tithe may not have been widely enforced until later in the tenth century (Stenton 1971, 154–7), Bede's testimony (Haddan and Stubbs 1869–71, III, 314–26, at 317; EHD, no. 170) demonstrates that even in early eighth-century Northumbria, even in places 'where a bishop is never seen for many years at a time [...] not one man is immune from rendering dues to [him]'. In theory, therefore, even fledgling Christianity, of the sort which is generally postulated in a missionary context, imposed proscription of pagan rituals and performance of minimal Christian obligations.¹⁵ The Rheims evidence suggests that progress might be slow, but the Church is unlikely to have

am not convinced that the surviving evidence is sufficient to support Guillot's belief (1981, 113) that the failings of the converted *Normanni* lasted less than a dozen years.

¹⁵ The leniency initially exhibited in Iceland when the decision was made to choose Christianity could be cited as a case where a flexible Church allowed converts to have their cake (or horse) and eat it (Hermannsson 1930, 53–4 and 66–7, c. 7), but I doubt that the parallel is apt: Iceland lacked an existing entrenched Church and native Christian society, unlike the parts of the Danelaw under consideration here. In any case, the concessions made in 999 were applied for a short time only. The idea that the Church can be flexible where converts are involved, however, occurs in the writings of numerous churchmen after Gregory the Great (for whose advice see Colgrave and Mynors 1991, 106–8).

allowed repeated violations without at least some protest, if only to articulate higher standards and reinforce higher goals. As was made clear in I Corinthians, 10. 21: 'You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devil: you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils.'

Conversion would also have involved Christianization of the group's institutions. We can speculate that their laws and social regulations would have required at least some adjustment initially. And what of kingship and government? The way in which the early Danelaw regions were ruled and administered by their leaders is unfortunately obscure. We should like to know the extent to which the settlers adopted the elements of royal government of the kings they defeated. The Anglo-Scandinavian coins bearing Christian motifs or saints' names—coinage generally being a royal prerogative—are tantalizing but ambiguous evidence in this regard (fig. 4). The earliest of the saints' coins, the Edmund pennies of East Anglia minted from *c.* 895 to *c.* 918, demonstrate that a cult of the recently dead king had developed by this stage, indicating that there were Christians in East Anglia to promote it. That the coins were issued by the Church is unlikely on numismatic grounds (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 319–20 and 323; Stewart 1982, 249–50); but it does not necessarily follow that the religious convictions of a newly converted lay governing class were behind the choice of design. Similarly obscure is the relationship of the Church in Northumbria to the pagan incomers. If the continuing reference to armies in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle during the latter stages of Edward the Elder's reign is significant, it may be that the Danish conquerors rejected whatever state structures existed and ruled without them. On the other hand, among the gifts of Christianity, according to Fletcher (1997, 519), were 'techniques of power', and we may wonder whether the settlers were motivated to adopt the local religion—so closely identified with kingship in Anglo-Saxon England—in order to wield power more effectively. Whether in the initial stages they wanted or needed the Church would have been a decision based on variables invisible to us, including relations with the existing English population (Hadley 1996; and this volume). The degree to which kingship could function in England without Christianity is unclear: was it, for example, required to legitimate succession (hence the strange tale of Guthred),¹⁶ and therefore a compulsory element of English kingship that the Scandinavians took on as one of the tools of government? Did East Anglia, Danish Mercia, and Danish Northumbria attempt in the 880s to subsume and maintain the institutional, king-led, Church, or could their rulers have taken a separatist line, until, in the case of East Anglia and Danish Mercia, they were forced to capitulate in this respect as in others by Edward the Elder after his conquests of 917–18? The apparent absence of conversion as an issue in the submissions of the losers to Edward the Elder—when the king might have been expected to insist on it—might on the other hand, as Angus (1965, 159) pointed out, suggest that formal conversion had taken place already; but these are hardly well-documented transactions.

¹⁶ See above, n. 4.

Conversion, as we have seen, is not just about belief, and assimilation is not just about settlement, intermarriage, language, and art; it involves integration into and modification of existing structures. What is not clear is the extent to which assimilation really had begun in the initial years of Scandinavian settlement. If we opt for a rapid conversion, it follows that assimilation was the pattern everywhere from the beginning, but if we entertain the possibility that the Church was initially resisted or sidelined by the Scandinavians, we should at least consider whether in some parts of England assimilation could have been preceded by an alternative, separatist stage, which has disappeared from view.¹⁷

¹⁷ I should like to thank Peter Foote and Patrick Wormald for reading and commenting on drafts of this paper.



+ SĒ EADMVND REX
GVNDBERTI MŌN

Fig. 4. An Edmund penny from East Anglia, c. 895–905

ABBREVIATIONS

- Asser Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, in Stevenson, W.H. ed., 1959, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, and Keynes, S. and Lapidge, M., trans and eds, 1983, *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*, Harmondsworth: Penguin
- B Birch, W. de Gray ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum: a collection of charters relating to Anglo-Saxon history*, 3 vols and index, 1885–99, London: Whiting (vols 1 and 2), Charles J. Clarke (vol. 3), Phillimore (index)
- EHD *English Historical Documents I, c. 500–1042*, Whitelock, D. trans. and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- S Sawyer, P.H., *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated list and bibliography*, 1968, London: Royal Historical Society

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Survival and Mutation: Ecclesiastical Institutions in the Danelaw in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

JULIA BARROW

Indeed, when the mob of evil ones reaches the monastery of virgins which Æthelthryth the glorious virgin and bride of Christ had built, alas, it invades, pollutes the holy things, tramples and tears. The sword of the madmen is stretched out over the milk-white consecrated necks (Blake 1962, 55; my translation).

Viking atrocities provided dramatic material for historians in subsequent periods, and the view that Danish settlement in eastern England had a cataclysmic effect on church organization, though there have been attempts at a re-evaluation (Hadley 1996; Page 1987; Dumville 1992b), still has some resonance today (Owen 1994b). Certainly the period from the 860s to the end of the tenth century brought great changes to the structure of the Church in eastern England, but it is unjustified to assume that these were wholly due to the Scandinavians. The process of development was a complex one, to which various parties contributed.

In the space available here it will not be possible to provide a complete examination of ecclesiastical institutions in the Danelaw in the ninth and tenth centuries. Instead, particular aspects will be picked out for comment: firstly, the changes to the diocesan map and the appointment of bishops; secondly, the history of one Anglo-Danish kin-group in the Danelaw with a particularly significant impact on ecclesiastical affairs, the Oda-Oswald-Oscytel-Thurcytel family; and thirdly, the Benedictine foundations in the Fenlands in the tenth century. Finally some comments will be made on the provision of pastoral care in the tenth century.

Diocesan Organization in the Danelaw

To investigate what happened to dioceses in the Danelaw, it is necessary to sketch the salient features of the ecclesiastical network in eastern England in the ninth century before the period 866–77. The area which came under Danish political control in the late ninth century consisted in ecclesiastical terms of the dioceses of York, Lindsey, Leicester, Elmham, and *Dummoc*, with parts of the dioceses of Lichfield (Derbyshire) and London (Essex and also parts of Hertfordshire, though these were lost to the Danes fairly soon). By the 870s all these bishoprics had two centuries of existence behind them, but none of them had achieved much distinction apart, perhaps, from York, which had attained some reputation as a place of learning and whose cathedral appears to have been supported by a number of stational churches in the city (Godman 1982, esp. 118–19; Morris 1986; Norton 1998, esp. 5–24). Evidence for how these sees (Lichfield and London apart) were endowed in the period before the Viking invasions is limited. However, the see of Leicester possessed one estate in the Thames valley up to the middle of the ninth century, and may, therefore, possibly have already owned one or two of the large estates in Oxfordshire, which by the eleventh century belonged to the see of Dorchester. Furthermore, the large estate of the see of York listed in Domesday may to some small extent reflect pre-ninth century endowment,¹ although it is worth noting that some estates held by the community of St Cuthbert in Northumbria were confiscated by Ælla and Osberht during their rivalry for the Northumbrian throne in the 860s (Aird 1998, 28), and it is quite likely that the contenders could have seized lands of the church of York also. With the exception of York, none of the cathedrals in this area appears to have trained future bishops, though admittedly our knowledge of the careers of middle-Saxon bishops is poor. The education of clergy, at least in the seventh and eighth centuries, was the work of minster communities such as Whitby (Yorks), Repton (Derbs), and Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leics) (Cubitt 1989; Colgrave 1956, 84–7; Keynes 1994, 37–9). These minsters were often wealthy enough to have fine buildings and sculpture, numerous traces of which survive (Parsons 1977; Cramp 1977; Dornier 1977b; Biddle 1986, 16–22; Taylor 1965, II, 516–18; Hall and Whyman 1996; Gem 1993a, 34, 48, 51; we also have some documentary evidence for a few of their endowments, for example in the cases of *Medeshamstede* (Northants) (S1440 (B464); S1805 (B842); Stenton, F.M. 1970a), and Wirksworth (Derbs) (S1624 (B414)). Many minsters were closely linked to kings (cf. HE, iii, 14, 24), who chose them as burial sites (Biddle 1986, 16–22), made use of their hospitality, and expected the clergy serving the minsters to say prayers for them (cf. Tangl 1916, 361–2; Barrow 1999, 110; S193

¹ For London, see Gibbs 1939, 1–8 and Keynes 1993. For Leicester, see S1271 (B443), a charter of Bishop Ceolred of Leicester granting Pangbourne (Berks) to King Berhtwulf of Mercia. Fairly early possessions of the see of York would include Otley, though much of this estate was alienated for part of the tenth century, but not Sherburn-in-Elmet, which only entered archiepiscopal possession after 963 (Wood 1987, 20–38).

(B434)). There is some evidence for takeover of various minster churches by bishops during this period (Wood 1987, 36–7), a phenomenon for which we have fuller evidence from western England (Sims-Williams 1990, 169–71; Keynes 1991, plate 5). Documentary evidence for smaller churches, below the level of minsters, is poor. Pastoral care was probably largely carried out by clerical members of minster communities, and, quite possibly, by the ninth century the inmates of these communities were predominantly clerics, though evidence for nuns survives into the middle of the ninth century at least.² The network of churches in eastern England was well integrated into larger ecclesiastical frameworks represented by the provinces of York and Canterbury, both of which held fairly regular councils (Cubitt 1995, 39–42; Keynes 1994); on a wider scale, contacts with Rome and with Francia were maintained through correspondence and pilgrimage (Levison 1946; B184; S197 (B454)).

One of the crimes laid at the door of the Vikings is the disruption of several of the eastern English dioceses. Certainly disruption occurred, but the precise cause is a matter for debate. At Leicester the last Anglo-Saxon bishop was Ceolred, appointed between 840 and 844, who died between 869 and 888; he was succeeded by Alhheard, Bishop of Dorchester, at some point between 869 and 888, and the see remained at Dorchester until it was removed to Lincoln after the Norman Conquest (Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 218). For the diocese of Lindsey the picture is a little more confused.³ The last known bishop before the Danish invasions, Beohrtraed, last occurs in office between 862 and 866, though two other bishops, whose sees are not specified and who may have been bishops of Lindsey, occur in 866 and 869 (Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 219; O'Donovan 1973, 93; Sawyer 1998, 237–8). There is then a gap until 953 when Leofwine occurs as Bishop of Lindsey; then, in 971, on the death of Oscytel, Bishop of Dorchester and Archbishop of York, Leofwine succeeded him at Dorchester, holding it in plurality with the see of Lindsey, and although on Leofwine's death there were two further Bishops of Lindsey, the see was united with that of Dorchester in the early eleventh century (Whitelock 1959, 74; Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 215, 219, 224; Sawyer 1998, 238). At York, although information about archbishops in the late ninth and early tenth centuries is sparse, it cannot necessarily be assumed that there were any breaks in the succession (Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 224). Most obscure is the situation in East Anglia. Indeed our lack of information is so great

² Blair and Sharpe 1992, 5–6; for a contrary view, see Cambridge and Rollason, 1995, 87–104, countered by Blair 1995, 193–212; for nuns, cf. Abbess Cynewara (of Repton?) in S1624 (B414).

³ The site of the throne of the bishops of Lindsey before the end of the ninth century is a matter of debate, and though there is currently a preponderance of views that it was at Lincoln, there are conflicting views about which church in Lincoln was the superior one: see Bassett 1989, 26 (St Mary-le-Wigford); Hall 1989, 175, 182 (St Martin's in Dernstall); Sawyer 1998, 79 (St Peter at Pleas). Stocker 1993, 118–19, prefers Bardney, or else a multiplicity of episcopal churches; see also, in the same volume, Gem 1993b, 123–7.

that the sites of neither of the pre-Viking Age sees can be identified with certainty (Campbell 1996, 4–7). The last Bishop of *Dummoc* was Æthelwald, who was consecrated between 845 and 869 (Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 216), and whose seal-matrix resembles coins of Æthelberht of c. 865 (Webster and Backhouse 1991, 238); the last pre-Viking Bishop of Elmham was Hunberht, who died in 869 (Fryde, Greenway, Porter, and Roy 1986, 216). Nothing can be ascertained about episcopal provision for East Anglia until the mid-tenth century, when, between 941 and 953, Theodred, Bishop of London, drew up his will, in which he referred to his *biscopriche* at Hoxne (Whitelock 1930, 4). Evidently Theodred was Bishop of Suffolk at least, if not all of East Anglia, in addition to being Bishop of London (Whitelock 1937–45, 171).

The traditional view of these events is that the Danes drove out or killed the bishops in the 860s to 870s (Hunberht was killed by the Danes according to a twelfth-century Durham tradition), and that they refused to allow any succession in these sees (Hart 1992, 30). It is likely, however, that the political figures resisting the appointment of new bishops were the kings of Wessex, who would have been able to prevent the archbishops of Canterbury from consecrating new bishops, and who would have been motivated to do this by their own political interests (Barrow 1994, 28–9; Campbell 1996, 14). A not dissimilar pattern of events is discernible in the fates of several saints' cults in Francia (Lifshitz 1995). From the point of view of the kings of Wessex, it was much better to restrict episcopal status to clerics based on the fringes of the kingdom of Wessex and its satellites than to allow the Danish leaders to acquire bishops for their areas who might strengthen Danish rule in the east. Support for this interpretation comes from the letter of Pope Formosus to the English bishops (891x896) in which he says that the Anglo-Saxons had been so slow to react to the growth of pagan rites in *Anglia* that he had thought of excommunicating them, until he had been told by Archbishop Plegmund that the bishops were at last watchful and were trying to evangelize (whether the newcomers, or apostates, is not stated). Formosus went on to order that as soon as a bishop died, his death should be announced by the Archbishop of Canterbury to his suffragans, and that a new bishop should be canonically elected and consecrated as soon as possible.⁴ Presumably some complaint had reached Formosus from clergy in the Danelaw who had found themselves deprived of bishops.

The solution, however, was probably not what Formosus intended. As we have seen, ecclesiastical control of Suffolk, and probably of all of East Anglia, passed to the Bishop of London. By some means Theodred had acquired large endowments in Suffolk, some of which passed to the new line of bishops of Elmham (Whitelock 1930, 102) on his death, which occurred in or slightly before 953. The source of these

⁴ Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 35–8, no. 8, at 36–7. Although half of this document was interpolated by Christ Church Canterbury during the primacy dispute with York it is quite likely that the first half of the text, which comments on paganism and episcopal appointments, is genuine.

properties is uncertain, but is unlikely to have been Theodred's kin since he was probably of German origin. Perhaps Theodred, who, being a foreigner, might have been viewed as neutral by all parties, had persuaded Edward the Elder or Athelstan to make old minsters with surviving endowments available to him.⁵ Only in the mid-tenth century did East Anglia once more have its own bishop, Eadulf, and he may possibly have had local origins, since he had a kinsman called Kenelm who appears to have lived in Norfolk.⁶

Dorchester, which took over Leicester's episcopal throne, had briefly been the site of the bishopric of Wessex in the mid-seventh century. Its Oxfordshire endowments, as recorded in Domesday, are superficially reminiscent of the 300-hide endowments notionally regarded as appropriate for seventh and eighth century Anglo-Saxon episcopal foundations, yet they probably reflect not the holdings of the see of Leicester before the Viking invasions, but rather an attempt at the end of the ninth century to compensate the bishops for what they had doubtless lost in Leicestershire. Some of the Oxfordshire estates, for example Banbury, probably had belonged to middle-Saxon minsters.⁷ Dorchester obtained further possessions during the tenth and eleventh centuries, chiefly in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Huntingdonshire (Bates 1992, 21–3). Where the dates of the grants are known they fall in the eleventh century, for example Stilton and Leighton (Hunts) (DB, I, 203d). Some may however be tenth-century: noticeable in Dorchester's holdings by 1066 were properties in several shire towns in the see, including some major churches, one of which was Bedford, which it probably acquired before 971.⁸ We know little of the backgrounds of bishops appointed to Dorchester between the end of the ninth century and 949/950, though they all bear Old English names and presumably represent the choice of the kings of Wessex. However, we do know something of Oscytel (Barrow forthcoming, a), who succeeded to the see 949/950, and who belonged to a kingroup of mixed Danish and Anglo-Saxon origin, settled in the Fens, which will be discussed more fully below. Oscytel was evidently in high favour with Eadred. It is possible that his early ecclesiastical career was pursued in Wessex, which would have enabled him to build up contacts at court. As Bishop of Dorchester, Oscytel received royal grants of estates in Nottinghamshire (Southwell and

⁵ Whitelock 1930, 2–5; Whitelock 1937–45, 171, and Whitelock 1975, 18–20, on Theodred's properties and his background. See also entries for Hoxne and Mendham in DB, II, 379a, 380b.

⁶ Blake 1962, 92: Kenelm was able to attend a court meeting at Thetford as a witness.

⁷ On Dorchester's pre-Conquest holdings, see Bates 1992, 21–3. I am grateful to John Blair for letting me see his paper 'Estate memoranda of c. 1070 from the see of Dorchester on Thames' in advance of publication.

⁸ On Dorchester's urban properties see Bates 1992, 10. It is noticeable that Thurcytel abbot of Bedford lost that church shortly after the death of his kinsman Oscytel; perhaps Bedford church had been given to Dorchester by Edward the Elder, and Oscytel had delegated charge of it to Thurcytel.

Sutton) in the 950s, probably originally intended to improve the finances of the see of Dorchester and to give the diocesan greater influence over the northern part of his see. From 959 Oscytel was also Archbishop of York and probably from this point Nottinghamshire was transferred into the northern province (Sawyer 1998, 151; Barrow forthcoming, a). The pluralism shown by Oscytel and by his successor at Dorchester, Leofwine (and by Oscytel's kinsman and successor but one at York, Oswald), was a characteristic feature of the English Church in the late tenth and eleventh centuries. Not only could bishoprics be held together but also abbeys with bishoprics. There were various causes for this: the need perceived by the English kings to entrust Northumbrian affairs to followers who could be expected to remain loyal (Whitelock 1959, 73; Cooper 1970, 1–2), the lack of suitable men with a Benedictine training (Barlow 1979, 64–5), and the poverty of some foundations (Barrow forthcoming, b), though this, *pace* Hill and Brooke (1977, 16), is unlikely to have been a feature of the archbishopric of York.

The territory of the old see of Lindsey in the late ninth and early tenth centuries was probably, as Peter Sawyer (1998, 149) argues, under the ecclesiastical authority of the archbishops of York. York still claimed the *parochia* of Lindsey in 1061 (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 551). The see of Lindsey, as re-founded in the middle of the tenth century, had, in contrast to Dorchester, almost no economic resources. Indeed, according to Domesday the only property held by Bishop Wulfwig of Dorchester (1053–67) in Lincolnshire consisted of Louth (which he had purchased), Stow, and some land in and around Lincoln itself, while a little property in and near Lincoln was attached to St Mary's church in the town, which evidently had been the cathedral for Leofwine and his early eleventh-century successors (DB, I, 336a, 344a, 345b, 375a; Sawyer 1998, 151–2). Stow St Mary had perhaps been acquired either for the see of Lindsey or for the see of Dorchester before the death of Bishop Eadnoth of Dorchester in 1016, since later tradition (Stubbs 1868–71, I, 103) had it that he founded the church there, and Pope Nicholas II confirmed possession of Stow together with Newark (Notts) to Wulfwig in 1061 (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 551). However, the archbishops of York claimed possession of Stow and Newark, while according to Domesday the pre-Conquest proprietor of Newark was Godiva, widow of Earl Leofric (DB, I, 283d).

The archbishops of York were more favourably placed. The Scandinavian kings in York could sometimes be played off against the kings in the south, a technique used by Archbishop Wulfstan I (931–956, d. 959; Whitelock 1959, 72–3). In the first half of the tenth century the archdiocese of York lost the land between the Ribble and the Mersey to the see of Lichfield, presumably as one of the consequences of Edward the Elder's conquest of the area, which he began in 923 (Tait 1904, 1–3). Yet Athelstan in 934 gave Amounderness to Archbishop Wulfstan, a property which appears later to have been confiscated from him (Whitelock 1959, 72–3). From 959 it was, as Dorothy Whitelock showed, the policy of the English kings to bestow the see on bishops with dioceses south of the Humber and preferably ones with Danelaw connections. Under Oscytel (959–971), Nottinghamshire was transferred into the archdiocese of York and Southwell

and Sutton were added to the archiepiscopal estates.⁹ Oscytel also purchased lands and acquired a further estate, Helperby (Yorks), by confiscating it from its owners for polyandry, all of which dealings were recorded by Oswald (Archbishop of York 971–992) in a memorandum of estates lost to the archdiocese (Robertson 1939, 110–13, no. 54), which he made probably after the expulsion of Earl Oslac in 975. Oswald revived the church of Ripon, which evidently was in archiepiscopal hands by his time, though not necessarily earlier. Byrhtferth in his *Life of St Oswald* (Raine 1879–94, I, 462) places the account of Oswald's re-foundation of Ripon after the events of the years 988–991, though since his chronological order is muddled here perhaps not too much account need be taken of this. Although Beverley appears to have entered archiepiscopal control only under Ælfric Puttoc (1023–41), who revived its finances and translated the relics of John of Beverley, nonetheless it too had its own connection with Oswald, since his chasuble was preserved there (Raine 1879–94, II, 341, 343, 353–4). The idea of making Southwell, Beverley, and Ripon *secundae sedes* of the archdiocese may have originated as late as the time of Ealdred, who was much influenced by his stay in Cologne in 1054 (Barrow 1994, 33).

Overall, it is evident that in the tenth century the major preoccupation of bishops in the Danelaw area was the acquisition of land. They were politically and ecclesiastically influential only where they held estates. The archbishops of York needed the support of Scandinavian political leaders to obtain or preserve endowments; in return, presumably, they offered to urge their flock to accept the new political framework (Hadley 1997, 90–1). Other bishops were handicapped by a lack of resources. Only one cathedral in the Danelaw, York, continued to operate as such throughout this period: in all the dioceses between the Humber and the Thames the bishops had had to acquire new see-churches. The changes probably deprived them of accumulated clerical knowledge and also of well-educated manpower. In terms of canon law, the clergy of the Danelaw would have been bound by, and presumably were able to contribute to, royal legislation for the Church during the tenth century, but Church law may have been interpreted differently north and south of the Humber, to judge from some of the more idiosyncratic prescriptions of the 'Northumbrian Priests' Law', a compilation of the first half of the eleventh century (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 449–68).

A Network of Relatives: Oda, Oswald, Oscytel, and Thurcytel

An unusually prominent role in the development of ecclesiastical institutions in the Danelaw in the tenth century was played by one single family, to which both

⁹ Barrow forthcoming, argues for the grant being made to Oscytel as bishop of Dorchester; Stenton (1970b, 366) says that the grant was made to Oscytel to help him settle in as archbishop of York. Philip Dixon informs me that while the position and size of the late tenth- or early eleventh-century church at Southwell can be estimated, there is (or is as yet) no evidence for an earlier church on the site.

Archbishop Oscytel and Archbishop Oswald belonged. This family has been discussed in some detail by Andrew Wareham (1996), so all that is necessary here is to pick out some underlying trends. Firstly, the family was of mixed Anglo-Saxon and Danish origins. Secondly, it owned land in the Fens and adjacent parts of the East Midlands—Oscytel held Beeby in Leicestershire and Thurcytel held several estates in Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire (Whitelock 1937–45, 170, 175; Blake 1962, 96, 105). Quite possibly most of this land had not been in the family's possession for very long: Oda and Oswald obtained land in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire (Macray 1886, 48–9).¹⁰ One of Oswald's female relatives married Æthelstan Mannesone, who held numerous estates, mostly in Cambridgeshire (Macray 1886, 59–61). Thirdly, as far as we can see the family owed its status to its senior clerical members, Oda, Oswald, and Oscytel. This may have been because their ecclesiastical careers allowed them to build up contacts at the royal court in Wessex and gave them excellent opportunities to forward the careers of younger relatives (Wareham 1996, 47, 61). An important part of this advancement was education and also socialization by mentors outside the Danelaw, until the Fenland monasteries were able to provide a good education in the late tenth century. Oda was brought up away from his own family by a thegn with an Old English name, probably (though not necessarily) outside the Danelaw, who took him on a pilgrimage to Rome (Raine 1879–94, I, 404–6). As Archbishop of Canterbury, Oda presided over Oswald's education (Raine 1879–94, I, 410), which apparently was conducted by the Frankish scholar Frithegod at Canterbury (Lapidge 1988, 47; Bullough 1996, 5). Eadnoth, son of Æthelstan Mannesone, a young relative of Oswald, was a monk at Worcester, where Oswald was bishop, but later became abbot of Ramsey (Hunts), where he in turn took under his wing a young nephew and namesake of Oswald, protecting him from the consequences of a foolish prank and sending him to Fleury to study (Wareham 1996, 51, 61; Macray 1886, 112–14, 159–60; Hart 1962–3, 61, n. 4). Oscytel also protected his relatives' careers: on Oda's death he offered a home to the young Oswald (Raine 1879–94, I, 420; Wareham 1996, 47), and it is possible, as we have seen, that he gave charge of the church of Bedford to his kinsman Thurcytel.

Family solidarity, as Wareham has argued (1996, 49–53), also displayed itself in support for new Benedictine foundations in the Fens. Underlying this network of kin and property ownership may have been some feeling of insecurity, which Wareham attributes to worries among the family about clerical marriage (a noticeable phenomenon in the kin-group). This is likely, but the family may also have suffered from political insecurity, perhaps because some of its property was newly acquired. It is

¹⁰ Needingworth and Wistow (Hunts) and Burwell (Cambs). Burwell came via Oda who had been given it as reward for pleading with King Eadred to allow a marriage to take place between Edwin son of Othulf (? a son of a mixed marriage) and the daughter of Ulf (who presumably would be at least half Danish). Oswald purchased Needingworth and Wistow from Edgar. Another area of the Danelaw where there were significant changes in land ownership, partly at the instigation of Athelstan and his successors, was Derbyshire: cf. Sawyer 1975, 30–1.

noteworthy how far Oswald, in his Fenland dealings, relied on the support of Earl Æthelwine (Fisher 1952, 266–7), and how frequently sources show Oswald referring to Æthelwine as his *amicus* (Raine 1879–94, I, 429–30; Macray, 1886, 82–3). This was more than good fellowship: *amicitia* was a political alliance between families, usually secured through a marriage or a baptismal sponsorship (Le Jan 1995, 78–9, 289–90; cf. also Barrow 1999). Of course, it is possible that the insecurity was Æthelwine's rather than Oswald's: Æthelwine's family was from Wessex (Hart 1992, 591–7), and although his properties in the Fens were extensive, he may well have needed the help of Oswald's kin. In a not wholly dissimilar way Oscytel's support for Thorth, son of Earl Oslac, when he imprisoned Æthelstan, the priest of Horningsea, for receipt of stolen goods, may reflect a political alliance between Oscytel and Oslac at York (Blake 1962, 106). In short, the position of landowning families in the Fens, and presumably in much of the rest of the Danelaw, was precarious: political survival depended on networking, not least in the Church.

Benedictine Foundations in the Fenlands

Oswald and his relatives were active supporters of Benedictine monasticism in the 960s and beyond, and thus prime movers in one of the changes which took place in English ecclesiastical institutions in the tenth century. However, they were not the only agents in this trend: most of the new foundations were the work of Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester (963–84). Æthelwold and Oswald acted in different ways and from different motivations (Wareham 1996, 53), as will become clear. Æthelwold was partly motivated by zeal to recreate the monasteries of the seventh and eighth centuries (Wormald 1988, 39–41), especially those mentioned by Bede and those with significant relic cults (Thacker 1988, 60–2). Above all he wanted the site of Ely, for which he was prepared to pay a large sum (Blake 1962, 73–5; Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991, 39). Evidently Bede's account of the life of St Æthelthryth was Æthelwold's inspiration. He also re-founded *Medeshamstede*, now known as *Burh* (Peterborough), and acquired several of its old satellites, notably Oundle (Hunts) (S1448 (B1128); Robertson 1939, 72, no. 39), Breedon-on-the-Hill (S749 (B1283)), and Thorney (Cambs) (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991, 41). Oundle and Breedon appear to have been obtained only as endowments for Peterborough, but Thorney was founded as a separate monastery. Æthelwold achieved his foundations in the Danelaw without any family support (he was born in Winchester), largely with his own financial resources (Blake 1962, 72–121; it would be interesting to know where he obtained the money—perhaps from the income of Old Minster, Winchester?), though with political assistance from King Edgar, from Ealdorman Brihtnoth of Essex, and the powerful thegn Wulfstan of Dalham (Yorke 1988b, 81–2).¹¹ Æthelwold may, finally, have been motivated by jealousy of Oswald: it is noteworthy

¹¹ Note that Wulfstan of Dalham was the royal thegn who forced the clerks of Old Minster (Winchester cathedral) to leave in 964: Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991, 32.

that the tenth century Benedictine foundations in the Danelaw are crammed into a small area (the Fens) and were mostly established in a period of about six or seven years, with Oswald's Ramsey, probably founded in 965, being perhaps the earliest.¹²

Oswald's *modus operandi* differed in several respects. Firstly, he obtained the support of his family, though Wareham (1996, 49–53) shows that some of them displayed initial hostility to his plan. In addition to benefactions made by the family to Ramsey, it is worth noting that the abbey was established in Oscytel's diocese of Dorchester and presumably with his help. Secondly, Oswald was not primarily motivated by a desire to revive the past. He refused the site of Ely when Edgar offered it to him (Raine 1879–94, I, 427), in spite of the attractions of the cult of St Æthelthryth and the fact that it had been briefly held by Archbishop Oda (Napier and Stevenson 1895, no. 5; Robinson 1923, 118–19). Byrhtferth in his *Vita Sancti Oswaldi* (Raine 1879–94, I, 429–30) makes it clear that Edgar's offer of Ely to Oswald occurred at the same *witanegemot* as the one at which Oswald requested a site for a monastery from Ealdorman Æthelwine (Barrow 1996, 94–5). Æthelwine offered a place where there were already a few clerics anxious to become monks; in spite of this pre-existing group of clergy, the site had not necessarily been a minster in the ninth century and certainly had no ancient saint's cult. This may indeed have been viewed by Oswald as an advantage: he wished to dedicate his new abbey to St Mary and St Benedict, thus underlining his principal inspiration: reformed Benedictine monasticism as practised at the home of the relics of St Benedict, the abbey of St-Benoît-sur-Loire at Fleury (Raine 1879–94, I, 413, 416–17; Nightingale 1996). Oswald's relative lack of interest in acquiring or retaining early Anglo-Saxon saints is suggested by his gift of relics of Wilfrid to Æthelwold's foundation of Peterborough (Thacker 1988, 62), though he did show some interest in relics brought by Æthelwine to Ramsey (Thacker 1996, 248). Oswald's relative Thurcytel, who, according to Orderic Vitalis (Chibnall 1969–81, II, 340–3), was the founder of Crowland, was, unlike Oswald, keen to revive the past, hence his choice of the shrine of St Guthlac for a new monastic foundation.¹³ Yet Thurcytel's idea of maintaining his family's status through a Benedictine foundation is closer to Oswald's motivations than to Æthelwold's. Overall, the introduction of Benedictine monasticism into the Fens in the tenth century seems to have been largely dictated by factional interests headed by rival ealdormen, Brihtnoth of Essex on the one hand and Æthelwine of East Anglia on the other, and eagerly supported, or indeed

¹² The dating of Æthelwold's houses is discussed by Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991, xlviii, who show that the foundations of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney cannot be placed any more precisely than 964x971; for the date of the foundation of Ramsey, see Barrow 1996, 94–5.

¹³ Orderic's dating of the foundation to the time of Eadred is far too early: by the time Thurcytel made the foundation he had become a canon of St Paul's, which only happened after he ceased to be abbot of Bedford, in or after 971 (Blake 1962, 105). Whitelock (1937–45, 174) suggested that Orderic confused Eadred and Æthelred the Unready, which is the likeliest explanation.

exploited, by, respectively, Bishop Æthelwold, anxious to expand his interests into an area of England rich in saints' cults, and Bishop Oswald, keen to protect the future of his relatives.

Local Churches and Pastoral Care

It is in the area of parochial organization that the biggest changes in the Church in eastern England in this period are to be found. The most obvious change was expansion: from the tenth century, more particularly from c. 950, the number of churches soared. This development marked off eastern England from western and most of southern England, where the growth in the number of churches began later, occurred more slowly, and caused less disruption to the status of pre-existing churches (Blair 1988b, 2). Predominantly the new foundations in the Danelaw were small, and most were set up on estates by landowners, or in towns by, presumably, leading figures in urban populations (Stocker, this volume). Nonetheless, these new foundations did not replace the pre-Viking churches, a very large number of which (perhaps, indeed, the majority) appear to have survived. Admittedly a few did not, for example Flixborough, but at Flixborough there is no evidence of a catastrophic end or even that there had still been a minster on the site by the time of the Viking invasions (cf. Loveluck 1998, 159). The surviving churches had, however, to adapt to changed circumstances, often losing endowments, or parochial territory, or both. Even so it is not clear how fast they had to adapt, for in most cases we have no written evidence until Domesday or later, and it is not safe simply to assume that the function they performed in the twelfth century was necessarily the same as in the tenth.

Some pre-Viking churches not only survived but also continued to display signs of superior status. The two principal signs of this are the existence of a plurality of clerks at a single church and the retention of parochial superiority over a large area. The two characteristics may often have coincided, but tend to be recorded in different types of source and for different churches. Most useful for the former are wills, such as that of Theodred (Whitelock 1930, 2–5), and some references in the *Liber Eliensis* (Blake 1962, 105–6). Most useful for the latter are twelfth-century charter references to superior parochial status provided that these can be backed up by evidence suggesting that the churches had existed in the pre-Viking Age, for example pre-Viking sculpture or architectural remains, or documentary evidence for large parishes of the high Middle Ages following the boundaries of an ancient large estate which fragmented in or after the tenth century.¹⁴

Evidence for groups of clergy serving churches survives from some East Anglian churches in the first half of the tenth century: Hoxne, Mendham, and Stoke by Nayland in Suffolk had communities of clergy by c. 950 and are unlikely to have been new

¹⁴ The criteria for defining churches of superior status are set out by Blair 1985, 104–42, and are further discussed for the particular circumstances of the Danelaw by Hadley 1996, 109–28.

foundations (Whitelock 1930, 2–5); clergy at *Bedricesworth* (later Bury St Edmunds) appear to have preserved the body of St Edmund from the late ninth century onwards (Hart 1992, 57); and Horningsea in Cambridgeshire preserved a tradition according to which it was served by priests between the late ninth century and the reign of Edgar (Blake 1962, 105–6). Churches of this type could concentrate on seeking noble patronage and are not infrequently mentioned in tenth-century wills (Blair 1988b, 2–6); Horningsea began early on, perhaps already c. 900, to obtain grants of land from newly converted Danes (Blake 1962, 105–6). Provided that they retained sufficient landed endowments to support a group of clerics and a building of imposing appearance (Blair 1985, 121–3), they were assured of bequests to pay for post-obit prayers. Moreover, laws of Athelstan (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 53–4) and Æthelred ordered prayers to be made for the king: Æthelred applied this burden to the laity as well as to the clergy, and the richer laypeople perhaps hired the clerics to perform their share (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 379–82). Smaller churches with only one priest would be much less well equipped to compete in this area of activity. Indeed, so useful were secular minster churches that new ones were founded in large numbers in the final century before the Conquest, though admittedly most of our information about such foundations concerns churches in southern and western England (Blair 1985, 121–3; Blair 1988b, 6).

In some parts of the Danelaw pre-Viking churches were able to maintain parochial authority over sizeable territories: this tended chiefly to happen where large estates were able to survive, as in parts of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire (Hadley 1996, 113–15), and Yorkshire (Hadley 2000, 233–48, 254–7), and, though to a lesser extent, sometimes on royal manors in Northamptonshire (Franklin 1985) and Buckinghamshire (Owen 1994b, 6). In Yorkshire, churches in Beverley, Catterick, Dewsbury, Easby, Gilling West, Leeds, Masham, Northallerton, Otley, and Ripon, for example, all show signs of continuing status, with pre-Viking and later sculpture and the survival of large parishes (Hadley 2000, 233–48, 254–7). Ripon even survived destruction by King Eadred in 948 (ASC s.a. 948). By contrast, Lincolnshire and East Anglia appear to have lost superior parishes of this type early on: the few observable in Lincolnshire in the twelfth century are more plausibly interpreted as later creations, set up to mirror manorial structures of the tenth and eleventh centuries (Owen 1994b, 7). As Dawn Hadley (1996, 123–4) argues, however, lords of Lincolnshire manors would not usually have bothered about the parochial duties of their sokemen, since the sokes were often fragments of villas rather than whole villas and therefore it would be easiest to leave the burden of founding a new church to whichever lord owned most of the vill in question. Hadley also argues that there may have been few royal land grants—often a means of preserving great estates—in Lincolnshire either. In East Anglia the move away from minster churches to village churches (the term *tunkirke*, meaning either ‘village church’ or ‘estate church’, occurs in some eleventh-century wills (Blair 1987, 269–71)) was probably the result of a speedy and complete breakdown of large estates, itself assisted by the development of an active land market, well evidenced throughout the *Liber Eliensis* (Blake 1962). Tom Williamson (1993, 158) speaks of ‘competitive church-building’ in Norfolk,

spurred on by landowners' desire for status. East Anglia apparently experienced much more of a population boom than the rest of England in the tenth and eleventh centuries, which would also have contributed to the growth in parishes (cf. Darby 1977, 93–4).

By the end of the thirteenth century the diocese of Norwich had 1349 parishes, and the diocese of Lincoln just under 2000. Ely, created as a diocese in 1108 to serve Cambridgeshire, had 150 parishes in 1217. The diocese of York had just over 800 by the late fourteenth century. By contrast, dioceses in western parts of England had, comparatively speaking, far fewer: even the large see of Coventry and Lichfield had only about 500. The peak period for parish foundations in eastern England is likely to have been the tenth and early eleventh centuries: Domesday Book, which understates the number of churches, lists 400 in Suffolk and 300 in Norfolk, and archaeological evidence, where available, shows that the earliest building phases of churches usually lie in the tenth century.¹⁵ Late ninth-century origins have been claimed for the church at Raunds Furnells (Northants) (Boddington 1996, 4–8), but a more recent re-evaluation by Paul Blinkhorn dates the earliest phase there to the earlier tenth century,¹⁶ which is also the date of the earliest phase (a timber structure) of the church at Burnham (Lincs) (Coppack 1986, 39–43). More common are mid-tenth century foundations like Wharram Percy (Yorks) (Beresford and Hurst 1990, 57–61). St Peter's, Barton-upon Humber (Lincs), may date back to the late tenth century (Rodwell 1982). The earliest church at Raunds Furnells lacked a graveyard, though one was added about fifty years later when the church was enlarged. Evidently, however, it probably began as a private church for the local estate owner: its site was next to a thegnly hall (Boddington 1996, 5). The close links between new parish churches and the Anglo-Saxon thegnly class emerge also in written sources: John Blair (1987, 269) comments on testators of the late tenth century referring to 'my priest' and 'my church', and the much-quoted passage in *Gethyncþo* about the *ceorl* thriving to the rights of a thegn stipulates a bell-house, and, in the *Textus Roffensis* version, a chapel as two of the necessary status-symbols (Liebermann 1903, I, 456). Grants to Ramsey in the time of Ealdorman Æthelwine included estates at Burwell (Cambs), one of which consisted of three hides, some other land, houses, a *curia* and the church of Burwell (Macray 1886, 51); this estate was given by the church's patron, Ælfgar, a *familiaris* of Æthelwine, and it was likely that this was

¹⁵ For the diocese of Norwich, see Campbell 1996, 20; figures for the diocese of Lincoln can be compiled from McHardy 1992, 176–88 (for Lincolnshire and Leicestershire) and from the following Victoria County History volumes: VCH Oxford, vol. II (Page 1907), 8; VCH Northampton, vol. II (Serjeantson and Adkins 1906), 20; VCH Buckinghamshire, vol. I (Page 1905), 282; VCH Bedfordshire, vol. I (Page 1904), 323; and VCH Huntingdon, vol. I (Page and Proby with Norris 1926), 358. For the diocese of Ely, see VCH Cambridge and the Isle of Ely, vol. II (Salzman 1948), 147. I am grateful to David Smith for information about the diocese of York. For the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, see Franklin 1997, xxv.

¹⁶ Dawn Hadley, pers. comm.

a new estate church.¹⁷ Edgar's Andover code (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 97–8; EHD, no. 40), which laid down that thegns should give financial support to two categories of thegnly church, with and without a graveyard, must have been specifically intended to give churches of this type a sound financial basis: pre-existing churches were already well-provided for, often having endowments and being able to collect church-scot as well as most tithes.

The creation of parishes was not only a feature of the countryside but also of towns, themselves mostly undergoing a process of formation in the tenth century. The Scandinavian leaders were keen to make use of central places as army bases, and churches already existing in central places might, as at Derby (Northworthy before the Danish invasions), act as nuclei for urban settlement (Hall 1989, 157–8). At Northampton, the earliest signs of urbanization occur not far from St Peter's (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England 1985, 44–6). At both York and Lincoln several churches existed before the Danish invasions, and survived, for example St Mary Bishophill Junior in York (Wenham, Hall, Briden, and Stocker 1987, 89); moreover, alliances between the Scandinavian leaders and the ecclesiastical authorities seem to have been underlined by the striking of coins bearing the names of saints—St Peter's pennies in York, commemorating the patron saint of York Minster, and St Martin's pennies in Lincoln, commemorating presumably the patron saint of St Martin in Dernstall (Grierson and Blackburn 1986, 322–3). But the existing churches did not give enough scope to the new urban settlers, who began to build their own proprietary churches, in very large numbers in Norwich, Lincoln, and York and in sizeable numbers in Ipswich, Huntingdon, Cambridge, and elsewhere (Morris 1989, 169–76). Again, the period *c.* 950–*c.* 1000 saw the foundation of many of these, for example St Mark's church in Wigford in Lincoln (Gilmour and Stocker 1986, 15–17), or, in York, St Helen-on-the-Walls (Magilton 1980, 18) and St Mary Bishophill Senior (Wenham, Hall, Briden, and Stocker 1987, 88–9). These churches were usually laid out with cemeteries from the beginning, which shows that they were fully independent from the time of their foundation onwards, rather than being integrated into a hierarchy of superior and inferior churches as was normal in western and south-western England (Barrow 1992, 88, 95). This raises the question of the relationship between the new churches and their diocesan bishops. Clearly East Anglian bishops and those of Dorchester by the end of the tenth century would have found it hard to have any clear idea of how many parishes they had in their dioceses: only in the twelfth century did they acquire the administrative

¹⁷ The choice of the term *advocatus* (patron) to describe Ælfgar suggests that the twelfth-century Ramsey chronicler viewed his control over his church as comparable to the patronage of a twelfth-century lord over a parish church attached to his manor. For further examples of tenth-century landowners with churches, cf. Macray 1886, 84, for a female landowner, Æthelgiva, granting a church (? another estate church) at Elsworth (Cams), and Macray 1886, 85, for a priest, Gode, granting the church of Holywell (Hunts) to Ramsey, but this might perhaps have been an older church.

infrastructure which would make this possible, and only in the thirteenth century did this become fully operative (Harper-Bill 1990; Smith 1980; 1986; Cheney 1950). Nonetheless the owners of the new churches may well have desired episcopal approval for their foundations. The evidence of the *sacrarium* at Raunds shows that, although the earliest church was tiny and simple, care had been taken to ensure that its consecration proceeded according to accepted norms; presumably, therefore, a bishop, if not necessarily the Bishop of Dorchester, must have presided over the ceremony (Parsons 1996, 58–63). Moreover, bishops in the tenth and eleventh century, even though they lacked a proper administrative framework, would certainly have exercised pastoral authority on their own estates, and the archbishops of York, by the first half of the eleventh century, exercised full spiritual authority at the very least over the city of York and its immediate surroundings, to judge from the ‘Northumbrian Priests’ Law’ (Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke 1981, I, 464).

Conclusion

Many of the pre-Viking churches in eastern England did survive the Danish invasions, contrary to the traditional picture of events. Their survival may well have been encouraged by the Danish leaders, probably irrespective of their own beliefs, perhaps in the hopes that churchmen could play a useful political role in creating support for the new status quo among their flocks. Possibly churchmen also acted as negotiators in dealings with Wessex and English Mercia. However, the survival of older churches did not mean that they did not change: they very often lost status, endowments, and parochial territory. We cannot be entirely certain when these processes occurred or who the agents of change were. Quite possibly Danish leaders were responsible for some of these developments, but equally active were the kings of Wessex and of England, whether as reorganizers of the diocesan map or (at any rate at Ripon) as destroyers. However, probably the most significant force for change was the desire for smaller churches under proprietorial control shown by many, though not all, members of the landowning classes, leading to a loss in rank for many minsters. The emergence of new seigneurial parish churches in eastern England was the most significant change in ecclesiastical structures in the Danelaw. It gathered momentum relatively late in this period, in the second half of the tenth century, though the origins of the process are clearly visible earlier.

It is also noticeable that there was considerable regional variation within the Danelaw. Minster churches had better chances of survival in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire than in Northamptonshire, and next to no chance of survival in Lincolnshire or East Anglia. These differences do not bear much relation to divergences in the frequency of Danish and Norse place-names, but do correspond closely to population densities as recorded in Domesday Book; in other words, areas with few minsters in the tenth and eleventh centuries were the areas with the densest populations in 1086. Where we have information about the people who were establishing new churches we can see that they bear a mixture of Old English and Old Norse names. They

shared a certain disregard for the rights of pre-existing churches, but, as far as we can see from the Raunds evidence, were keen to observe the proper forms of ritual.

One feature of the society of eastern England in the late tenth century which emerges from the *Liber Eliensis*, the *Ramsey Chronicle*, Oswald's memorandum of the estates of the archbishopric of York, and the Burton Abbey charters (Sawyer 1975) is the rapidity with which land changed hands. This suggests that it may have been hard for better-off families to maintain rank simply through land-ownership: other strategies had to be employed, and here the Church had a vital role to play. It provided careers for members of kingroups, and these clerical kinsmen were expected to use their positions to assist younger relatives. Furthermore, families could bestow property on new Benedictine foundations to secure the perpetuation of their memory and places for young kinsmen destined to become monks. At the same time, the availability of land for purchase made it possible for an outsider to the area, Bishop Æthelwold, to build up the endowments of a large number of new Benedictine monasteries. The activity in the land market, which led to the fragmentation of older estates, must also therefore have assisted the establishment of new parish churches. Almost certainly this active land-market was in part the result of forfeitures arising from the conquests of the Danes and later of Edward the Elder, but we may perhaps also be safe in assuming that a steady growth in population in much of eastern England was additionally responsible. The shortage of written sources for eastern England in the tenth century evidently conceals a dynamic but rather insecure society, whose upper classes made use of religion, or at least its outward trappings, to give themselves some stability.¹⁸

¹⁸ In preparing this paper I have been greatly assisted by Dawn Hadley and John Blair, and I am grateful to John Blair for showing me his unpublished work on Yorkshire minsters. Responsibility for errors is my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASC Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Whitelock, D., with Douglas, D.C. and Tucker, S.I., trans, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 1961, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- B Birch, W. de Gray ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum: a collection of charters relating to Anglo-Saxon history*, 3 vols and index, 1885–99, London: Whiting (vols 1 and 2), Charles J. Clarke (vol. 3), Phillimore (index)
- DB *Domesday Book, seu Liber Censualis Willelmi Primi Regis Angliae*, 4 vols, Farley, A. and Ellis, H., eds, 1783–1816, London: Records Commission
- EHD *English Historical Documents I, c. 500–1042*, Whitelock, D. trans and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- HE *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Colgrave, B. and Mynors, R.A.B., eds, 1969. Oxford: University Press
- S Sawyer, P.H., *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated list and bibliography*, 1968, London: Royal Historical Society

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Part 4. Material Culture and Identity

Monuments and Merchants: Irregularities in the Distribution of Stone Sculpture in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire in the Tenth Century

DAVID STOCKER

With its abundance, its unambiguous religious and cultural connotations, and its occasional striking image of a secular warrior caste, stone sculpture has played a major role in most discussions of Viking settlement in England. Such discussions, however, have frequently focused on the style-critical assessments of details. Regrettably, in the 1970s the flow of debate about such sculptures in Yorkshire was becalmed amidst disputes about the likely date and origins of the Scandinavian style, and about the meanings of place-name forms (Binns 1956; Wilson and Klindt-Jensen 1966; Wilson 1967; Sawyer 1971, 163–6; Fellows-Jensen 1972; 1973; 1975; Lang 1973; summarized in Bailey 1980, 209–14). The sculpture, however, can throw light on other Danelaw issues, besides those of formal art history, and this chapter seeks to discuss it in a somewhat different way, accepting its current dating and considering it as evidence for aspects of the distribution, development, and character of Anglo-Scandinavian settlement. This discussion has its roots in recent studies of sculpture as evidence for the development of settlement in tenth-century Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire (Everson and Stocker 1999; Stocker and Everson forthcoming). It seeks to develop models to account for the patterning visible in the deposition of sculpted stone burial monuments in Lincolnshire and argues that such models can then be compared with similar patterns which are, as we shall see, also present in Yorkshire.

The Lincolnshire Model

Before we can draw conclusions from patterns of deposition, we have to consider what the artefacts themselves are actually evidence *for*. In Lincolnshire, tenth-century stone sculpture represents, almost exclusively, the remains of grave furniture set up in

Christian graveyards, which may (or may not) have been focused on contemporary churches; we will return to investigate the character of this Christianity later on. A burial monument in a churchyard is a very final and public statement and, as well as a religious affiliation, it conveys a distinctive political and cultural message through its form and decoration. In tenth-century Lincolnshire, individual burial under a stone was apparently novel. Burial in this new fashion, therefore, represented a cultural shift which occurred during the tenth century. Furthermore, because the form of these monuments and the art styles used in their decoration are derived from Hiberno-Norse prototypes in Yorkshire, north-west England, and the Isle of Man, this choice of monument type must indicate either an incomer with a Viking background from one of these places, or a desire by an indigenous individual's family to associate themselves with this newly arrived, dominant Anglo-Scandinavian culture.

The presence of a stone sculpture at a particular place usually represents the location of a contemporary Christian graveyard (Morris 1983, 52–3; Everson and Stocker 1999, 70–2). Although occasional stones may have been moved from one church to another during the course of the many cycles of reuse to which churches are subject (e.g. Stocker and Everson 1990), the large numbers of stones built into modern fabrics, and the density of such churches in the Lincolnshire countryside, mean that any such movements from church to church are unlikely to affect the broader patterning visible today. Indeed, where we have more certain evidence, for example from excavation, it shows that although early carved stones get recycled within their buildings on a regular basis, they move from one building to another much more rarely—and then usually within towns (Stocker and Everson 1990).

The first point to make about the pattern of deposition of these finds in Lincolnshire is that they are extremely common (fig. 5). On average, one in five medieval church sites retains pre-Conquest sculpture, and in parts of the county (around Sleaford for example) the proportion is as high as one in two. There are differences in density of distribution across the county, sculpture being somewhat more frequently found in the stone-rich areas than it is in those areas where stone had to be imported. But it is far from rare even in these stone-poor areas, and this slight variability in survival may be due to a propensity to reuse good stone more frequently in such areas. The picture in Lincolnshire, then, is of large numbers of tenth- and early eleventh-century graveyard sculptures, of remarkably uniform types, distributed quite evenly across the region.

To answer the question why such carved stones are distributed in this way we must first agree whose monuments these stones represent. The evidence suggests that these are the exclusive monuments of an elite. The costs of the monumental stone itself and of its carving and transport, and also the distinction which it conferred on the deceased, must surely point in this direction. Accordingly, we may note that at the overwhelming majority of Lincolnshire churches only one or two such monuments have survived to be recorded. This is true also in the many cases where large collections of stones prove to represent a single original monument which was cut up for reuse as building material. This would imply that, contrary to the prevailing orthodoxy (e.g. Lang 1978b, 11), the surviving stones at many churches represent a relatively large percentage of the

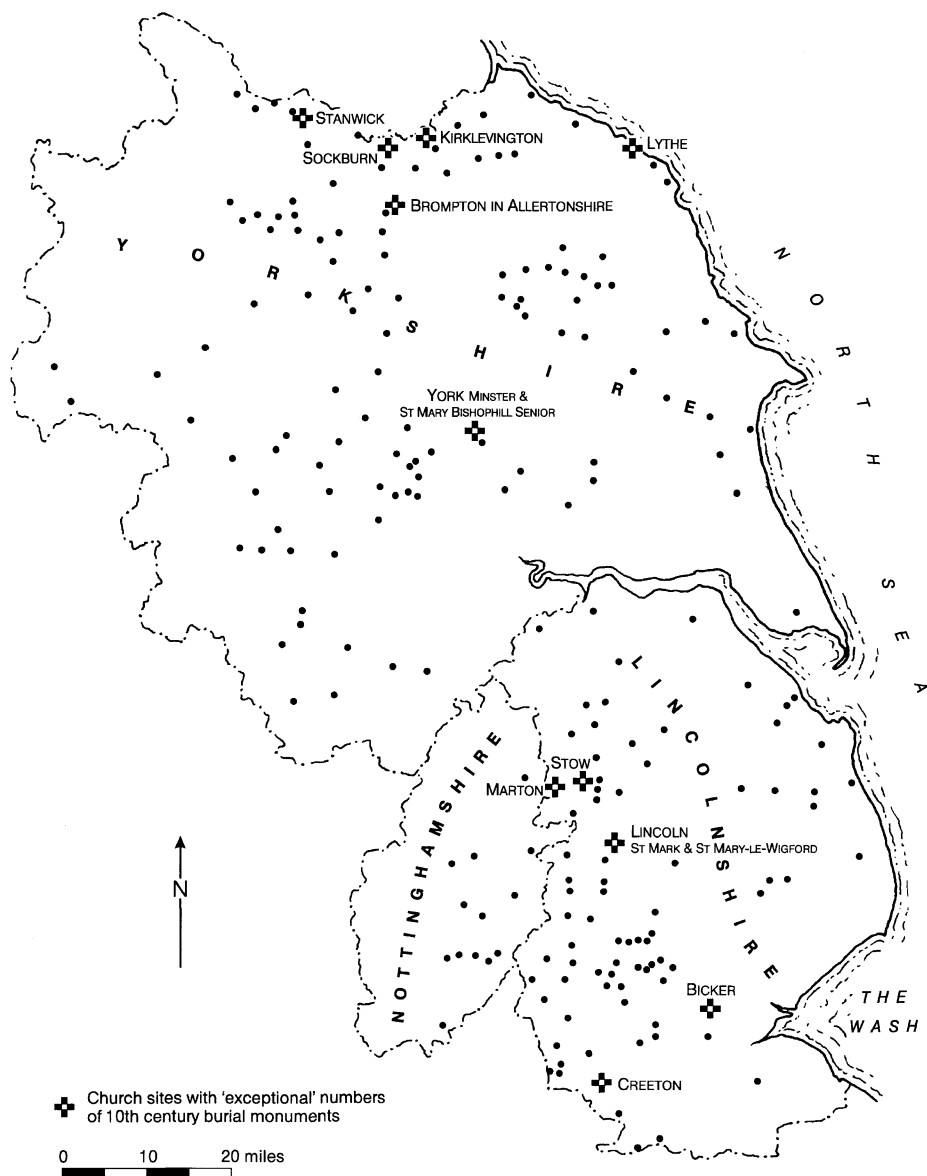


Fig. 5. Map of the eastern Danelaw to show locations of sites mentioned in the text. The background dots show the locations of all tenth- and early eleventh-century sculpted finds in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire (Sources: Collingwood 1907; 1909; 1911; 1915; Mill 1916; Lang 1991; Everson and Stocker 1999)

original total number of monuments provided at each church. In other words, although burial monuments are found at many church sites, at most they are found in small numbers, with one, two, or three original monuments at each. The evidence suggests, therefore, that the survival rate is nowhere near as low as is commonly presumed, and that a surprisingly high percentage of the original numbers of monuments of the tenth and eleventh centuries is represented in modern times by at least one fragment.

The conclusion that these monuments were burial markers of an elite minority is supported by excavation. At Furnells Manor, Raunds (Northants) (Boddington 1996), a graveyard of some five hundred burials, was in use for only a few generations during the tenth and eleventh centuries. It contained just one small group of elite burials in the centre of the plot, and only two of these were elaborated with carved stone monuments. These were the burials, it was argued, of the founders of the churchyard, church, and manor (Cramp 1996, 112). Studies of the stone sculptures in Lincolnshire have reached the same conclusion: the sculptures represented the monuments of the elite, but also, typically, they were the founding monuments in a new generation of parochial graveyards (Everson and Stocker 1999, 76–9). In Lincolnshire, then, the picture which emerges from the distribution of the sculpture was of the foundation of many new graveyards scattered across the region by members of an elite, who marked their own graves and those of their families in a novel and distinctive way. In doing so they used a small number of standardized carved stone monuments, which proclaimed them members of the new Anglo-Scandinavian elite through both their deployment and decoration. This conclusion stands in contrast to much previous writing on the distribution of stone sculpture, which has a tendency to presume that the sculpture was used by a wide cross-section of contemporary society and that its spatial and numerical distribution, therefore, indicates the overall density of Scandinavian settlement (e.g. Bailey 1980, 214–15).

Because we are able to date the Lincolnshire monuments with some precision, we can propose that, generally speaking, this process of graveyard foundation started in Lincolnshire in the second or third decade of the tenth century, became particularly intense in the second half of this century, and perhaps tailed off in the early eleventh (Everson and Stocker 1999, 76–9). So far this general picture of parochial churchyard foundation derived from the distribution of sculpture in Lincolnshire has been confirmed by excavations at both rural and urban churches. This patterning in the distribution of Lincolnshire stones, then, allows us both to propose a model which can be discussed in terms of local secular and ecclesiastical politics, and to integrate the foundation of graveyards with other evidence for the foundation of parishes and for the nucleation of settlement in the tenth century.¹ In order to provide a basis for discussion of patterning in the Yorkshire material, however, we need to explore not just the norm

¹ The interrelationship between the three processes has recently been explored in another paper (Stocker and Everson forthcoming).

of the distribution, that is the sites with one, two, or three monuments, but also the 'exceptional' sites.

There is a handful of Lincolnshire sites with tenth-century sculpture that do not fit our model of church foundation. These are sites where greater numbers of stone graveyard monuments at a single church indicate that the pattern of elite burial is unusual. Conceivably, such cases might simply represent a disaster in the elite family (resulting in many contemporary monuments), but such explanations will never account, for example, for the minimum of twenty monuments at St Mark's church, Lincoln, or for their diversity of form (Stocker 1986). Such 'exceptional' survivals are usually explained as a product of the residuality process. It has been thought hitherto that there is something special about the post-depositional history of churches like St Mark's, which has resulted in the survival of a high percentage of the original monument population here, whilst at other sites, it is presumed that similarly large numbers of monuments have disappeared through the recycling of stone during episodes of church rebuilding. St Mark's might also be thought to possess a particularly large collection because the site was totally excavated, which provided the opportunity to recover monuments lost at other places. But although superficially attractive, this argument simply does not bear scrutiny. First, some twenty churches have been excavated in Lincolnshire this century and, of these, St Mark's is the only one to have produced more than two or three fragments of sculpture of this date. Secondly, before St Mark's was excavated, it had had a quite typical building and demolition history. In the Middle Ages it had an extended construction period of many phases, several of which had involved the recycling of early monuments from the first graveyard (Gilmour and Stocker 1986). Yet, even before excavation, five stones were already displayed in the Victorian church (Stocker 1986, 44–5); this was already more than from any other single church in Lincoln, save only St Mary-le-Wigford. Even if there had been no excavation at St Mark's, and we had therefore only ever known about the stones which had emerged through the normal recycling processes, this church would still have preserved 'exceptional' numbers of monuments. It would not have been quite so outstanding a collection in the county as it is today (see figs 6 and 7), but it would still have been one of the richest sites for Hiberno-Norse derived sculpture in the county, along with Creton (with ten monuments), Lincoln, St Mary-le-Wigford (six), Marton (six) and Stow (five).²

There is no reason to think that the survival, at a relatively small number of sites, of relatively large numbers of graveyard monuments is the result of an exceptional

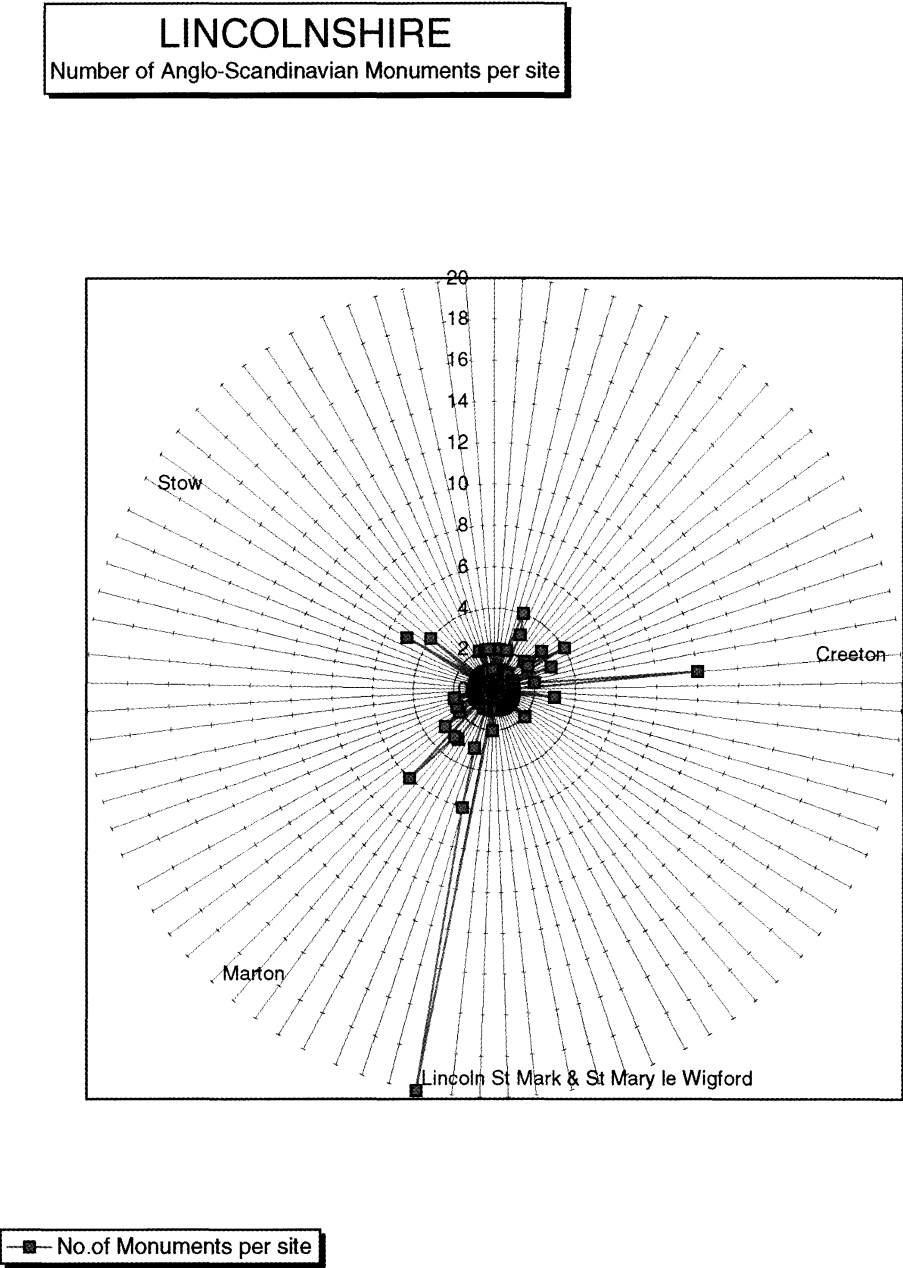
² The identification of a threshold beyond which collections of monuments are considered 'exceptional' provides room for debate. In Lincolnshire the average number per site was about 1.9, so a threshold of double the average plus one seems reasonable and five has been selected. In Yorkshire the average number of monuments per site is nearer 3.1, and therefore a threshold of eight has been selected.

Fig. 6. List of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Lincolnshire (Source: Everson and Stocker 1999)

SITE NO. OF MONS.

Aisthorpe	2	Glentworth	1	North Rauceby	2
Ancaster	1	Gosberton	1	North Thoresby	1
Bardney	2	Hackthorn	1	North Witham	1
Barrowby	1	Harmston	2	Ropsley	2
Bassingham	2	Holton-le-Clay	1	Rowston	1
Bicker	4	Hough-on-the-Hill	1	Ruskington	1
Blyborough	3	Hougham	1	Saxilby	1
Bracebridge	1	Howell	1	Scott Willoughby	1
Brant Broughton	1	Humberston	1	Sempringham	1
Brattleby	1	Kirby Green	1	Sleaford High School	1
Brauncewell	1	Kirkby Laythorpe	1	Sleaford St Giles	1
Broughton	2	Kirkby Underwood	1	Stainby	1
Burton Coggles	2	Kirton-in-Lindsey	1	Stoke Rochford	1
Burton Pedwardine	3	Laceby	1	Stow	5
Cammeringham	2	Lincoln Cathedral	2	Swarby	1
Carlby	3	Lincoln City	1	Syston	4
Coleby	1	Lincoln St Mark	20	Tallington	1
Colsterworth	3	Lincoln St Mary-le-Wigford	6	Tathwell	1
Conisholme	1	Lincoln St Paul	3	Theddlethorpe St Helen	1
Corringham	1	Little Carlton	1	Thornton Curtis	1
Cranwell	2	Little Ponton	1	Thornton-le-Moor	1
Creeton	10	Lusby	1	Thurlby-by-Lincoln	1
Crowle	1	Manby	3	Toft-next-Newton	3
Cumberworth	1	Market Deeping	3	West Allington	1
Dowsby	3	Marton	6	Whaplode	3
Eagle	1	Mavis Enderby	1	Wilsford	2
Ewerby	1	Miningsby	3	Winterton	1
Fulbeck	1	Normanton-on-Cliff	2	86 sites	169 mons
Gayton-le-Wold	1	Northorpe	1		
Glentham	1				

Fig. 7. Radar chart demonstrating sites with 'exceptional' numbers of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Lincolnshire



building history in the period between the eleventh century and the twentieth. None of these five churches have anything in their post Anglo-Scandinavian history which singles them out in this way. Consequently, in Lincolnshire, we have to accept that there were *always* a small number of churches which were 'exceptional' in the quantities of monuments of Hiberno-Norse type erected in their graveyards. Given that we have already argued that these tenth-century monuments represent the incoming and *Quisling* elites, in this small number of Lincolnshire cases we are obliged to argue that, because the elite represented by the stones is evidently larger than the norm, these sites are unlikely to represent a single lordly family unit, and they should be contrasted both with the great majority of sculpture sites in Lincolnshire and with the type of church represented by the Furnells excavations. It is to this small group of 'exceptional' church sites that we should now turn, before taking our Lincolnshire models into Yorkshire.

Exceptions to the Model

First St Mary's Stow, with five monuments, is unusual amongst the group of churches with large collections of such stones because it is the known site of a major minster which, although re-founded in the mid-eleventh century by Bishop Eadnoth of Dorchester, was probably based on an earlier church of some importance (Gem 1984; Sawyer 1998, 246–52; Field 1984). Concentrations of pre-Viking memorials have long been considered indicators of minster or monastic churches in northern and eastern England (Collingwood 1927, 22–6), and their patterning in Northumbria has been used as the basis for a detailed consideration of the pre-Viking church there (Cambridge 1984). It is sometimes presumed that Viking Age monuments can be used in a similar manner. But if the explanation for the concentration of monuments at Stow does reside in its status as a minster church, which imposed its burial rights over a wide area (and thereby required each elite family in the district to bury here), then our evidence across the county probably also suggests that Stow is an isolated example of this type of minster church in Lincolnshire (see Hadley 1996, 123–4). Stow may have had a subordinate *familia* of junior churches, without burial rights (although there is little evidence for this), but it seems it was established in a countryside where the norm was already many small 'parochial' burial grounds, with only one or two elite monuments per graveyard. Only some twenty percent of all early sculpture in Lincolnshire occurs at church sites where we have any reason to think that there may have been a senior church (Everson and Stocker 1999, 74–6, table 8). Perhaps Stow is an example of a minster church type which was more common outside Lincolnshire, in areas where parochialization was a later phenomenon and was less affected by the establishment of the new Anglo-Scandinavian elite in the tenth century (Hadley 1996, 114). Certainly this sort of minster establishment was much more common in the West Midlands, home territory of the principal patrons of the new minster, Earl Leofric and his wife Godgifu, and in the Thames Valley where Bishop Eadnoth himself was based.

The presence of such minsters may be one explanation for concentrations of burial monuments of Hiberno-Norse derivation at certain churches, and this might well

account for the concentration of monuments at Creeton, for example.³ However, we should not think exclusively in terms of ecclesiastical status to explain our small group of churches, where an abundance of sculpture indicates the burial of an exceptionally large elite, especially in an area where the very existence of such undiscovered minsters has been doubted (Hadley 1996). These 'exceptional' graveyards might, equally, represent churches sited within unusual settlements with distinctive populations. The concentrations of monuments might represent, not the usual proto-feudal lord, with his family and retainers around him, burying in the family church (an *eigenkirch*), but rather, gathering places for a different type of social elite. A key to understanding these large elites, represented by 'exceptional' concentrations of monuments, is provided by the distribution of memorials at Lincoln itself (fig. 8). Lincoln was an ancient ecclesiastical site, yet it is not the ancient churches which have 'exceptional' numbers of Hiberno-Norse derived monuments. The known senior churches in the city, St Mary-of-Lincoln, the two St Peters (Arches and Plees), St Paul-in-the-Bail, and St Martin, are represented by only a small handful of such monuments: a total of six stones, one more than was known from St Mark's before excavation and the same as the number known from St Mary-le-Wigford. Furthermore, one of these churches, St Paul-in-the-Bail, has also been totally excavated, and from the tenth century onwards its development history was similar to that at St Mark's (Jones and Vince forthcoming). Yet St Paul's produced only three sculptures, two of which are conventional graveyard monuments and only one of which is a standard type (Everson and Stocker 1999, 217–21).

In Lincoln, the total numbers of monuments of Hiberno-Norse type are evidently not an indicator of a church's ecclesiastical importance. It has already been argued that they must point towards an abnormally large Anglo-Scandinavian elite in these 'parishes'. As it is clear that the city's senior churches were in operation during the tenth century, the fact that they have relatively few Hiberno-Norse memorials might be taken as evidence that the Anglo-Scandinavian elite who owned or supervised them were not large in numbers. Indeed on this evidence there may have been a single elite family per church, as may also have been the case in the countryside. Equally, it is clear that members of the Anglo-Scandinavian elite in the city were present in much greater numbers, not in the old churches' territory, but in the newly founded churches on the edge of the ancient city: in Wigford, at St Mark's, and St Mary-le-Wigford. These two churches between them have produced over eighty percent of the total number of known Hiberno-Norse style monuments from the city.

How can we explain the sudden appearance of large numbers of members of the Anglo-Scandinavian elite at the churches of St Mark's and St Mary-le-Wigford in the central part of the tenth century? The answer must lie in their location. St Mark's and

³ It is not easy to explain why Creeton churchyard contained more Anglo-Scandinavian monuments than any other unexcavated church in Lincolnshire. One possible explanation is that the church site was connected with the known minster at Castle Bytham, the adjacent parish to the west. Further work on this problem is underway (Stocker forthcoming).

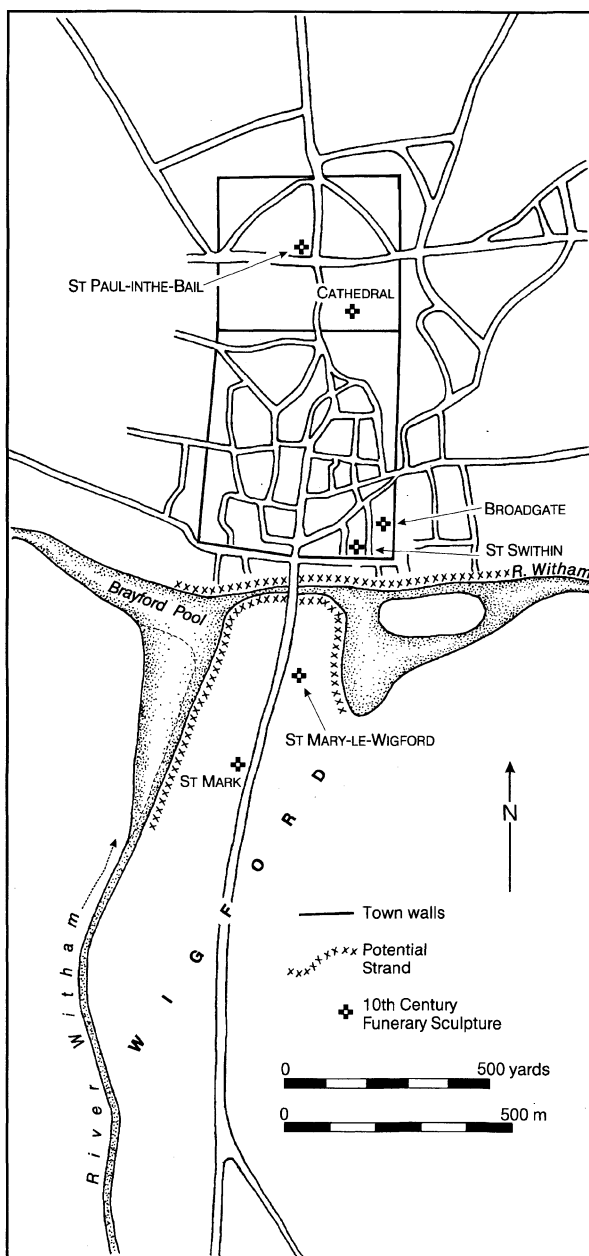


Fig. 8. Map showing distribution of sites with Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture in Lincoln (based on new research by Alan Vince; Vince and Jones forthcoming)

St Mary-le-Wigford are both sited adjacent to what Alan Vince has recently explained is the strand of Anglo-Scandinavian Lincoln (Jones and Vince forthcoming, fig. 5.2). These churches will have serviced the senior traders in the newly established port, who presumably set up homes as well as trading establishments here and, we can suggest, founded these churches close to their warehouses to provide for their own and their dependants' needs. By doing so, no doubt, they were marking some sort of social, political, or economic distinction between themselves, presumably a free mercantile elite, and the, perhaps largely indigenous, population within the old walled city to the north. This distinction between the two parts of the city may have persisted for some considerable time; in the late eleventh century the man who gave the west tower to St Mary's church had a Norse name, *Eirtig* (Everson and Stocker 1999, 214–6). Even if St Mark's and St Mary's churches were founded by single Anglo-Scandinavian lords, their collections of burial monuments suggest that many individuals of elite rank were buried here, presumably by arrangement. It is perhaps more likely, however, that these were both foundations established by groups of traders, as is thought to be the case with St Martin's Vintry and All Hallows-the-Great in London (Schofield 1994, 35).

The fact that 26 out of the 32 monuments representing the Anglo-Scandinavian elite of Lincoln come from St Mark's and St Mary's seems to be good evidence both for where the numerical majority amongst the Anglo-Scandinavian elite lived within the city, and for their likely profession. Like the elite of the later medieval city, they were merchants. This evidence suggests that, in the later tenth century at least, the Anglo-Scandinavian elite in Lincoln was dominated by traders established on the strands around Brayford Pool. Presumably these traders had settled in the city, built dwellings on shore adjacent to their moorings, and felt the need of adjacent churches. The sculptural evidence, however, also suggests that they had yet to migrate in numbers into other areas of the city. By contrast, on this evidence the resident population in the old walled city, who are known from excavation (e.g. Perring 1981), did not include a significantly larger proportion of the Anglo-Scandinavian elite than was the norm in the surrounding countryside. Here, as in the countryside, we may guess that the bulk of the population continued to bury at their traditional churchyards using graves which were not marked in the Hiberno-Norse fashion, although the isolated monuments of Hiberno-Norse type known from the old city may represent the burials of their new masters and their families.

It may be that a similar elite group was to be found at Marton-on-Trent, about ten miles north-west of Lincoln, which with six monuments is also 'exceptional' in the context of the surrounding region (figs 6 and 7). St Margaret's Marton is about a mile north of Torksey, where the complete absence of Hiberno-Norse sculpture is unexpected. Torksey had been a market site based around a strand with international connections since the eighth century, and is the location of many Anglo-Scandinavian finds of other types (Sawyer 1998, 196–7). We might expect a large population of monuments here, especially given the coincidence of Anglo-Scandinavian traders and stone monuments in the Wigford district of Lincoln. If we exclude the possibility that a large body of sculpture remains to be discovered here, as the model of sculpture

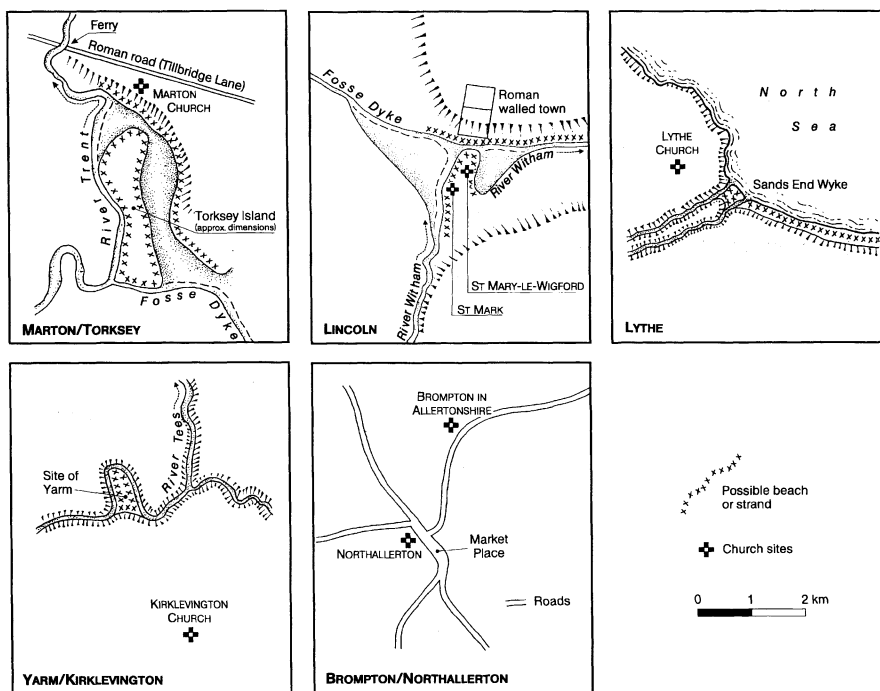


Fig. 9. Maps to show topographical settings of sites with 'exceptional' numbers of monumental sculptures in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire

residuality suggests, then one reason why Hiberno-Norse sculpture is absent from Torksey may be that elite traders, burying in the Hiberno-Norse manner, were actually using another church site. Such an argument suits the topography (fig. 9). In origin, we may infer, Torksey was a beach-market on a shingle bank or island in the Trent, and its development into a planned town may have resembled more perfectly understood examples of this type of site, such as London, and now Lincoln, as well as many towns in England and Europe, on the Rhine as well as in coastal or estuarine locations (Hobley 1981, 5–7; Ellmers 1981, 88–93; Vince forthcoming; McGrail 1985). Like early Wigford and many other places, Torksey probably began as a periodically occupied strand: a beaching place for traders' boats, where a market developed on the dry land above the high water mark. Initially there may have been only booths and other light-weight structures here, which only subsequently developed into a town, either because the traders found that more convenient, or because a local lord saw commercial opportunities in developing a new permanent settlement. If it did follow this common pattern of urban development, in its beach-market phase, when it was only occupied seasonally, Torksey would have been part of a parish located on the 'mainland'. In this case the parent parish was probably Marton, a settlement which may well have had its own strand facing Torksey Island. In such a development Torksey would have

acquired its own parochial rights only once a permanent settlement had been established, perhaps in the late tenth or early eleventh century, and certainly before Domesday, when it was assessed as having 213 burgesses (DB, I, 337a).

By contrast with the Wigford traders, then, traders using the strand at Torksey may have buried in the existing parish church at Marton. This would suggest that the foundation of Marton church predated the rise of the permanent settlement on Torksey island, and that the new town only broke away once the Anglo-Scandinavian traders had established a permanent settlement. The earliest monuments in Marton church date from the second quarter of the tenth century, and they reflect their Hiberno-Norse derivation more obviously than many other Lincolnshire monuments (Everson and Stocker 1999, 226–9; Stocker and Everson forthcoming).

The collection of four monuments at Bicker, in the Lincolnshire fens, may represent a similar demography, although this collection is not quite large enough in Lincolnshire terms to be ‘exceptional’. Nevertheless, Bicker was also an important haven in the tenth century (Hallam 1965, 40–2), and it may be that the monuments here are evidence for the presence of Anglo-Scandinavian traders, as opposed to a lordly family, especially as the monuments are of such varied types (Everson and Stocker 1999, 79). In the cases of Wigford and Torksey and perhaps at Bicker also, then, it seems that the abnormal concentrations of Hiberno-Norse derived sculpture may reflect a particular type of tenth-century trading settlement—one with a substantial population of incoming traders using an adjacent strand and, as a result, one which eventually developed into a permanent settlement. The large numbers of monuments are indicators of an enlarged Anglo-Scandinavian elite at these places, an elite which is exceptional compared with the surrounding settlements, and one which chose to distinguish itself in its burial customs from the surrounding population. Wigford and Bicker had beach-markets which by the mid-tenth century, we can suggest, had developed into permanent settlements with churches of their own; at Torksey, perhaps, the equivalent traders at the beach-market were burying in the adjacent church of Marton, the town of Torksey only developing somewhat later. These Lincolnshire traders, by burying under monuments derived from Hiberno-Norse prototypes, were not only dissociating themselves from the surrounding indigenous population, they were linking themselves with cultural and political groupings which shared common origins in Ireland, Cumbria, and Yorkshire, and it is to these origins we should now turn.

Patterning in Yorkshire Sculpture

The remainder of this chapter explores the tenth-century sculpture of Yorkshire using the models we have developed in Lincolnshire in order to try to understand its distribution. The first point to make is one of date; whereas in Lincolnshire the monuments mostly date from the second half of the tenth century, in Yorkshire the majority of stone sculptures have been dated, stylistically, to the period between c. 870 and 954, and clearly, therefore, they were created during a documented Viking settlement in the county. The phase of settlement with which they should be associated, however, has

long been disputed. Although they were once considered to belong to a period immediately following the settlement of the warriors of the Viking Great Army *c.* 870, it remains to be established that any stone sculptures date from this initial period of Danish settlement in the late ninth century. Following Alan Binns's (1956) initial work, both Richard Bailey (1978; 1980, 213) and Jim Lang (1973; 1991, ch. 10; Bailey and Lang 1975) have made detailed cases that they relate, instead, to the period of Hiberno-Norse political influence in Yorkshire which began in the first decade of the tenth century. Specifically, they argue, these sculptures belong to the period of political control which the Hiberno-Norse established over Deira in the second decade of the tenth century. This argument is based on the typology of certain types of interlace and cross head, which may have been derived from Irish monastic prototypes by the Hiberno-Norse and then brought first to Cumbria, Lancashire, and the Isle of Man between *c.* 900 and *c.* 910, before being taken further east, over the Pennines and into Yorkshire, as the Hiberno-Norse state (or alliance of states) developed through the first half of the century.

We have very little information about the Northumbrian state encountered by the Hiberno-Norse as they advanced eastwards after *c.* 900. It was not an old polity and had only been established in 866/7 by the first generation of Danish settlers, the descendants and followers of the Great Army, and, if we now remove the stone sculpture and place it later in date, we are left with very little in the archaeological record either. It is clear, however, that kings of this state ruled in partnership with the old Anglian church (Guthfrith became king *c.* 883 through the intervention of the community of St Cuthbert) and some of their leaders, at least, were Christians (Guthfrith was buried in the 'high church' of York in 895; Rollason 1998, 64). Although there had been extensive contact between the Northumbrian Danes and the Hiberno-Norse in Ireland, Man, and north-west England, there is no evidence for a political takeover of the Danish kingdom in Northumbria by the Hiberno-Norse until the second decade of the tenth century, when they started to colonize Deira under their leader Ragnald (Smyth 1978). Perhaps as early as 914 he had seized York from its Danish/Northumbrian rulers and he had certainly done so by 919 (Rollason 1998, 66). Furthermore, unlike the infiltration of the Hiberno-Norse Vikings into the north-west, which had been, at least partly, by agreement, it is clear that their takeover of the Danish kingdom of Deira was a military conquest (Wainwright 1975, 332, 337–9; Smyth 1978); although, it is not clear that they ever conquered Bernicia.⁴ Certainly the submission of the Danes of York to Æthelflead in 919 can be viewed as a desperate attempt on the part of the Danish leaders of Deira to build a defensive alliance against the advancing Hiberno-Norse (Wainwright 1975, 339). This defensive alliance was not successful, however, and far from marking a defeat of the Hiberno-Norse by the King of Wessex, the submission of Ragnald to Edward the Elder in 920 can be viewed as the latter's recognition of the new Hiberno-

⁴ According to a recent study, 'the place-name evidence for Scandinavian settlement in Northumberland is [...] virtually non-existent' (Watts 1995, 210).

Norse conquerors' regime in York (Wainwright 1975, 343; Smyth 1978). Throughout the period from at least 910 until 954 the southern English kings sought to impose their will on the unruly Hiberno-Norse Deiran kingdom, and to commandeer its highly successful trading economy. They met with mixed success. At times of political instability in Wessex, Deiran Viking kings were able to rule independently; although, at times when the King of Wessex was strong (for example between 927 and 939, under Æthelstan), he was able to impose his rule as overlord in York. It is against these momentous political events, therefore, that we have to envisage the erection of our Yorkshire burial monuments, which are so closely related to Manx and Cumbrian originals.

By contrast with Lincolnshire, where stone burial monuments were entirely new in the tenth century, there had been a tradition of stone funerary sculpture in Deira in the pre-Viking period, and it is usually the continuity between these pre-Viking monuments and those of the Viking age which is stressed (e.g. Lang 1978a). This tendency has had the effect, however, of playing down the Hiberno-Norse background of this material and over-emphasizing the continuity between Anglian and Hiberno-Norse Deira. There are, indeed, some stylistic traits which were clearly taken from the pre-Viking sculpture by the tenth-century sculptors (for example on cross 3 at Middleton, Lang 1973, 24–5), and the fact that the Hiberno-Norse should choose to take design motifs from their newly conquered population is an interesting matter,⁵ and one to which we will return, but for the moment we shall concentrate on the considerable *differences* between the Deiran sculpture of the first half of the tenth century and what had gone before.

In particular, regardless of any similarities of artistic style or details, there is clearly no continuity of *function* in the use of stone monuments between the mid-ninth and the early tenth century. In the pre-Viking period most sculpture decorated large crosses, which we must presume provided liturgical stations, especially marking burial grounds. Sculpted stone crosses and covers were not, so far as we know, used to mark individual burials except where shrines were created around the burials of key saints. Furthermore, it is also clear that prior to the late ninth century in Northumbria, sculpture was usually confined to churches at the upper end of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, to the extent that a find of sculpture has been used as evidence for the presence of a monastery in the absence of documentation (Bailey 1980, 81–4; Cambridge 1984). By complete contrast, in tenth-century Deira, as in Cumbria and the Isle of Man, the quarries' output consists of many small crosses and grave covers, designed to mark individual high status burials. They are comparable in form and function to the monuments found at Raunds and in Lincolnshire, and they are similarly found widely scattered at churches for which there is little evidence, besides their sculpture, for any antiquity of ecclesiastical use. In Deira, indeed, the carvings themselves sometimes proclaim through their imagery that they are

⁵ Ragnald's coinage is derived from Carolingian prototypes (Dolley 1978), which may provide further evidence for the 'imperial' character of his ambition.

the burial monuments of a secular elite, not an ecclesiastical one (Cramp 1982), and the inscribed shaft at Crowle in Lincolnshire declares 'this is the burial marker of [. . .]', although the name of the lordling itself is missing (Everson and Stocker 1999, 147–52). Furthermore in Deira, as in Lincolnshire, these are the monuments of an elite seeking to distinguish themselves from their contemporaries buried in the same graveyards, by erecting individual stone monuments over their graves. These Viking Age stone monuments were not only novel in ownership and function, but they carried crude characteristics of design, such as the ring-headed cross, and many other details, which would have associated them in the minds of contemporaries with the cultures of Cumbria, the Isle of Man, and Ireland, as much as with pre-Viking Northumbria (Collingwood 1926).

Not only is this new secular elite of the early tenth century proclaiming membership of a culture rooted in the north-west, in contradistinction to pre-Viking Northumbria, but they also seem to be making distinctive statements about their religious stance as well. David Wilson, Jim Lang, and Richard Bailey, have all described in detail how the iconography used in the decoration of some of these Deiran monuments represents a blend of Christianity and Norse mythology (Wilson 1967; Lang 1976; Bailey 1980, 122ff.; 1996, 85–94), and again this iconographic content differentiates these memorials from pre-Viking monuments. Although high profile political baptisms had an important role in international politics (see, for example, Abrams 1998), the perception that there was a sharp distinction between the newly accepted Christianity of the baptised and their former paganism was, evidently, held only by the evangelists themselves. As far as they and their chroniclers were concerned, polytheism was simply incompatible with Christianity so the English chroniclers, as well as some modern historians, have presumed that acceptance of baptism by the Hiberno-Norse meant that they had rejected polytheism. However, viewed from the Hiberno-Norse perspective, the acceptance of the god of the Christians was in no way incompatible with their traditional paganism. In their world-view, 'there was certainly no condemnation of the faiths of others, but rather a willingness [. . .] to accept new gods into the pantheon that governed their world, if it could be shown that faith in them proved profitable' (Davidson 1993, 142). This acceptance of the Christian god into the pagan pantheon is precisely what is depicted on the monumental sculpture. In the tenth-century graveyard excavated below York Minster, for example, a cover for a Christian grave was decorated with scenes from the Sigurd legend, whilst elsewhere in the graveyard, a cross-headed monument was decorated with an image of Weland the Smith (Lang 1991, 58–9, 71–20). Scenes such as these are now routinely, and convincingly, explained as the incorporation into Norse paganism of Christian figures; Sigurd, for example, is figured as the pagan counterpart of St Michael (Ellis 1942; Lang 1976; Bailey 1980, 124–5; 1996, 93), whilst Weland might be a figure representing the Holy Spirit (Bailey 1980, 106–16) or an evangelist (Bailey 1981, 86). The most striking example of this assimilation of Christianity into Hiberno-Norse paganism is found on the impressive cross at Nunburnholme. Here the original pre-Viking depiction of a priest holding chalice and host, symbols of the Christian Eucharist, was re-carved in the first half of the tenth

century with a scene depicting the feast of Sigurd and Reginn, the precise equivalent of the Eucharistic meal in Norse myth (Lang 1977, 88). The same admixture of paganism and Christianity can be seen in various aspects of literary culture in Ireland and elsewhere in the Viking world (McCone 1990; Davidson 1993, 50–4, 64; Bailey 1996, 93f.; Page 1995, ch. 10).

This fusion of Christian and pagan images, the so called ‘pagan iconography of Christian ideas’ (Bugge 1953), would, one can argue, be entirely appropriate for the new Hiberno-Norse elite, whose regime in Deira between c. 910 and 953 was clearly in alliance with the archbishops in York. Three archbishops are known to have shared power in the new state with the Viking kings of Deira during this period (Rollason 1998, 70). Archbishop Wulfstan I actually fought in Olaf Guthfrithsson’s army against the kings of Wessex in 940, and Symeon of Durham (Binns 1963, 46) records that ‘declarations of policy and judgement were made by the bishop and the whole army of the Angles and the Danes’. The sculpted memorials of this regime’s rulers evidently indicate that the new elite in Deira after c. 910 were nominally Christian, as their monuments usually incorporate crosses and other undoubtedly Christian motifs, but the scenes drawn from pagan Norse myth indicate equally clearly that their Christianity incorporated many pagan ideas. All this material evidence surely indicates the flowering of a hybrid religion which had characteristics of both paganism and Christianity. This judgement is an archaeological one, of the type recently advocated by Martin Carver (1998, 11–13), and it contrasts with the view of contemporary West Saxon chroniclers (and of those historians who base their views too closely on documentary evidence alone), which understands conversion to be a single, thorough-going event occurring at baptism, and so perceives a dramatic distinction between Viking paganism and Viking Christianity. The sculpture of this ‘conversion’ indicates, instead, a protracted period of at least a generation (and probably two) when the two religious systems were combined and amalgamated into a distinctive blend of both beliefs (Abrams, this volume).⁶

These monuments may interweave pagan and Christian iconography but they probably represent a Christian style of burial, and monuments with this mixed iconography would, presumably, have been sanctioned by the officers of the archbishop, who was clearly an important leader of the Hiberno-Norse Deiran regime in his own right, even if not of Viking descent himself.⁷ Consequently, we have to accept that this

⁶ If we accept the current dating for the Hiberno-Norse sculpture in Yorkshire, we are left with no firmly dated evidence for burial practice amongst Danish converts to Christianity from the families which arrived in York with the Great Army in 866/7. Presumably Danish converts of the generation between c. 867 and c. 910 buried in the manner traditional in the Anglian Church, that is, without individual stone monuments, which were reserved to mark only the burials of ‘saints’.

⁷ None of the three archbishops known to have been active between c. 910 and 954 have Norse names. The considerable extent to which the archbishops collaborated with the Hiberno-Norse regime is argued persuasively in Hadley (1996; 1997, 90–2).

novel type of hybrid Christianity, combining paganism with traditional Christian teaching, was one with which the Deiran church hierarchy was comfortable. It is probably in this context that we should view the series of decorative motifs copied from local monuments of the preceding two centuries (Lang 1978a; 1986); just as certain iconographies consciously referred to the pagan past, so other stylistic details consciously referred to the Christianity of pre-Viking Northumbria, although whether the contemporary onlooker saw such monuments as evocative of pre-Viking Northumbria or of the Hiberno-Norse west would probably have depended on the onlooker's own background. In Lincolnshire it has been suggested that the Bishop of Lindsey may have had a direct role in the production of sculpted stones after c. 950 (Everson and Stocker 1999, 84–5; Stocker and Everson forthcoming), and, although we have less consistent evidence in Deira, we can suggest that the archbishop was similarly involved here. As has been argued was the case in Lindsey, the Deiran sculptors may have been the archbishop's unofficial agents producing burial monuments which not only associated the new elite with their roots in Ireland and the north-west, and with iconography pandering to their pagan background, but which also subtly evoked an earlier, more glorious, phase of the Deiran Church, before the Vikings arrived. In Lindsey it is suggested that the bishop had control over the city's quarries; in York we know that a number of Viking Age monuments were cut in stones recycled from Roman buildings from the city itself (Lang 1991, 11–17, 23). Does this imply that the ruins of Roman York were owned by the archbishop?

Although some historians have thought the role and political authority of the church and of the Archbishop of York during the period of Viking rule badly compromised, the evidence from the stone sculpture seems to tell a different story. Stone monuments were erected over nominally Christian burials in what eventually became parish churches and this must be evidence that the archbishop was in close alliance with the incomers. One might suggest that, having rapidly accepted Hiberno-Norse domination in Deira, the Archbishop of York and his subordinates were largely responsible for defining this distinctive hybrid Christian culture, with its various pagan characteristics. Far from being provisional or transitional in character, these monuments could be seen as the mark of a new, self-confident Deiran nationalism. It may be that this amalgam religion lasted, in a strong and vital form, until the re-conquest of Deira by King Eadred in 954, and paganism continued to preoccupy the Northumbrian church into the eleventh century (Morris 1989, 58–63).

The definition of this new self-confident Deiran cultural amalgam, expressed through the burial monuments of its elite, is likely to have been given its most solid political meaning through its contrast with the religious culture of southern England, the constant enemy of Vikings in England since the days of the Great Army. It is important to understand that in southern England they did not bury their elite in this ostentatious way at this early a date. There, the comparative rarity of stone burial monuments in the early and mid-tenth century suggests that they were reserved for very major figures (Tweddle, Biddle, and Kjølbye-Biddle 1995, 22–3). Typically they occur at senior church sites and, probably, marked only 'saintly' burials at these places. It is not until

the eleventh century that they become at all common, and even then this may have been because Danelaw burial traditions were finally made fashionable under Cnut. In Viking Deira on the other hand, the indigenous church was happy to cooperate in the idea that many members of the new warrior elite were themselves similar to the old saints, and we should presume that they collaborated in honouring warriors at their burial, in the way in which only saints had been honoured in Northumbria previously. From the pagan point of view, initially held by the new elite themselves, this would have seemed only suitable as, in their warrior-based culture, the Norse equivalent of Christian saintliness was achieved through becoming an effective warrior on earth and thereby earning attendance at Odin's hall, Valhalla, in the afterlife. The Hiberno-Norse view may well have been that each good warrior was indeed a 'saint'. Although attractive, however, this conclusion challenges the long-established view that much Hiberno-Norse sculpture is a secular art form, as opposed to one with a wholly ritualistic meaning (e.g. recently Bailey 1996, 85 ff.). The southern church regarded the elevation of petty Deiran warlords to the status of saints through their burial monuments as a sort of blasphemy, and their chroniclers certainly thought the type of Christianity promoted in York little better than paganism (Abrams 1998, 13).⁸ Such major adaptation in thinking was part of the price paid by the archbishopric of York for its survival under their new rulers, but we do not have to view the archbishops through the eyes of the southern English chroniclers, as we have the evidence of the sculpture to show how successful this amalgam religion really was. The chroniclers may have viewed the compromises made with Viking paganism as degenerate, but the archbishops could have viewed the sculpture as a positive contribution to the new Deiran political and economic order. Coin distributions show that this was period of rising economic success in Deira and the archbishops might have been riding a concomitant wave of political change, using the new Hiberno-Norse elite to re-establish the authority of the Deiran church following the vicissitudes of the ninth century.

In Lincolnshire it was suggested that the incoming elite which arrived in Lindsey, after the conquest by the King of Wessex, was successfully established in the countryside through the promotion of a new hierarchy of episcopally controlled parish churches, each of which formed an indispensable part of the holding of each new landlord. These new parish churches, we argued, were legitimized by stone monuments placed over their founders' graves which were produced in the bishop's quarries in Lincoln itself (Everson and Stocker 1999, 84–5). Did the Bishop of Lindsey take his cue in the second half of the tenth century from the Archbishop of York in the first half? Was the archbishop using the same mechanism, taking the opportunity presented by the arrival of the new Hiberno-Norse elite, who were establishing themselves in the countryside during the period from c. 910 to 954, to erect a pattern of local, proto-parish

⁸ For example, the Hiberno-Norse and their allies are called 'idolators' and contrasted with the 'Christian' King Athelstan in 927, during the negotiations over the treaty of Eamont Bridge (Smyth 1984, 203); see also Whitelock (1941, 161).

churches alongside each new landlord's holding? The pattern of Deiran sculpture suggests that the new Hiberno-Norse ecclesiastical regime largely ignored the former centres of Deiran monasticism, at least few of these sites retain significant collections of monuments of this period, which suggests that the Hiberno-Norse elite were choosing to be buried elsewhere (e.g. Lang 1978b; Carver 1998, 24–6). Christian burial in these new locations would have been under license from the archbishop, and, furthermore, if the founders' monuments in these new graveyards were made of stones carved in York itself, on masonry recycled from Roman buildings which themselves belonged to the archbishop, such stones set in remote churchyards in Holderness, Ryedale or Teesdale would have been a very tangible visual symbol of the reach of the archbishop. Once there, in their remote churchyard, the semiotics of the original monument could be captured again and again by craftsmen working more locally, with more local materials at later dates.

In addition to the use of burial marker types which had hitherto been regarded as indicators of saintliness for the burials of their secular elite, the Hiberno-Norse incomers also took the shrine type of monument, which had been used in the Northumbrian and Irish churches to honour its most saintly figures, and used it as the model for a distinctive new type of grave cover, the hogback. Traditional views of the 119 hogback monuments listed by Lang have stressed the similarities between them and the pre-Viking shrine types of seventh- to ninth-century Northumbria (e.g. Lang 1984, 93–6). But no matter how similar these monuments might be, in terms of their decoration, to pre-Viking shrine types, once again, the whole idea of burying numerous members of the secular elite under such stone monuments marks a radical *discontinuity* in function. As with the other classes of monuments, many hogbacks also carry iconography which amalgamates pagan and Christian themes, and to this extent they are also an expression of the conversion of the Hiberno-Norse to this distinctive Deiran Christianity. However, the hogback monuments may also have another, more direct, symbolic value as monuments denoting conversion itself. They are clearly intended to resemble houses, as they frequently have tegulated roofs, and although this resemblance has sometimes been related to the hogback's origins in shrines, these are not aedicules; the hogbacks seem to represent *real* tenth-century lordly halls with bowed sides and even a door in one example (Lang 1984, 90–3; recently reconsidered by Stone 1999). Many examples also have remarkable animals holding the gable ends of the roofs in their mouths. It is clear that, in origin, these beasts are not fabulous; they are evidently muzzled bears, and less realistic depictions can be explained as derivatives from such originals (Lang 1984, 106). The bears have been explained as roof furniture, replicating such furniture on shrines or secular houses, but it may be that the 'bear with a house in its mouth' was intended to carry a more direct symbolic message. The house could easily be seen as representing either the individual lord, or his whole family and kin, whilst the bear was a well-understood medieval symbol of conversion from paganism to Christianity. Even though the bear was often treated as an image of sloth and lust in the later medieval period, harking back to St Augustine (Rowland 1973, 31–5), according to Hall (1974, 42), the bear was thought to give its cubs life by holding them between their paws and

licking them (an idea which has its roots in II Samuel 17.8). This potent image encouraged use of the bear as the symbol of the church's role in conversion of the pagans. In a simple symbolic reading of the hogback monuments, the bear might represent mother church whilst the cub is replaced by the lord's hall representing the newly converted family.

Some support for this simple symbolic reading of the hogback monuments might be provided by the very specific circumstances in which the image of the bear licking her cubs was used as a symbol of conversion of the pagans in the early Middle Ages. The image was particularly associated with St Gall, the evangelist of Switzerland in the early seventh century, and the bear is still this saint's attribute (Farmer 1992, 194, 517). St Gall's cult is documented from a very early date, and, furthermore, we know he was Irish by origin, having received his training along with his more famous colleague St Columbanus, at Bangor under St Comgall. St Gall was culted at his eponymous monastery in Switzerland in the tenth century, but one wonders if he may not have also been honoured at Bangor and, therefore, whether the symbol of the bear licking its cubs might have also been well known in Ireland at this date. If this were to be the case then we can speculate that the Hiberno-Norse arriving in Yorkshire in the first half of the tenth century would have been fully aware of the meaning of the symbol. Consequently, it is conceivable that the group of Yorkshire hogbacks might indicate that not only that the deceased's house has been converted by the Church to Christianity, but also that the household had specifically Irish roots.

Hogbacks are found in both large and small groups of sculpture in Yorkshire, and indeed in isolation, and if we read the iconography in the way proposed, such monuments may mark the conversion of individual elite families amongst the Hiberno-Norse to the distinctive Deiran amalgam of paganism and Christianity. Like the equivalent monuments in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire a generation later, those which occur in isolation or in small groups may have been set up as the founding monuments to the family of each newly converted lord, at the new proto-parish church. Furthermore, hypothetically, the foundation of each new church may have formed part of the Archbishop of York's scheme to build a distinctive Hiberno-Norse church in Deira.

In Deira the average total number of monuments (as opposed to sculptures) at each site is about 3.1 (figs 10 and 11), which indicates that there were nearly twice as many elite monuments in Deiran graveyards in the first half of the tenth century as there were in Lincolnshire in the second half (which has an average of 1.9 monuments per church site). Unlike in Lincolnshire, however, the Yorkshire stones have usually been treated as isolated carvings in the past, and they have not yet been rigorously grouped together into single monuments (e.g. Collingwood 1907; 1909; 1911; 1915; 1927). Thus, for example, although there are 18 sculptures of this period known at Sinnington (Lang 1991, 207–13), they may represent as few as 5 original monuments—although it is more likely that they represent 7.⁹ Until the Yorkshire sculpture has been reviewed and a

⁹ No. 1 (in Lang 1991) is clearly a fine shaft in an unusual stone; nos 4 and 5 could be parts

determined attempt has been made to join the multitude of fragments into minimum numbers of monuments at each site, the figures used for the forthcoming analysis will remain much more unstable and untrustworthy than those used for Lincolnshire above. Even so, similar patterns to those in Lincolnshire can also be seen in Yorkshire (figs 10 and 11); the great majority of Yorkshire sites clearly have a comparatively small number of monuments. The model we have derived from the Lincolnshire material suggests that these sites should represent a single elite family burying in their own 'proto-parish' church. The final part of this chapter, however, looks at some of the Yorkshire sites which have more monuments than could be accounted for by a single elite family group, and it proposes that some of these sites owe their origin to similar historical and topographical circumstances to St Mary-le-Wigford and St Mark's Lincoln and Marton.

Monuments and Merchants in Yorkshire

The enormous collection of 49 stones at Lythe (Collingwood 1911, 287–98; Lang 1984, 148–54) representing, perhaps, some 30–35 original monuments, is often related to the pre-Viking monastery at Whitby a few miles along the coast. In line with other pre-Viking monastic sites, however, there is very little Hiberno-Norse sculpture at Whitby (Lang 1989, 64, 67). Even so, Whitby's two Hiberno-Norse monuments do indicate a contemporary graveyard of some sort, so viewing Lythe as Whitby's surrogate graveyard would be problematic, even presuming that the tenth-century church at Whitby had retained its pre-Viking importance, which we may doubt. Our Lincolnshire model should imply, rather, that there was an abnormally large elite at Lythe in the tenth century, and that the elite at Whitby may be represented by a single group, perhaps a single family. In fact the model proposed for Wigford and Marton fits Lythe perfectly. Lythe church is placed near the brow of the hill above the fine strand created between the outfalls of the Mickleby Beck and the East Row Beck, along the sheltered bay called Sandsend Wyke (a place-name which clearly needs reconsideration) (fig. 9). No modern archaeological research has been undertaken at Lythe or at Sandsend Wyke, and no references to other finds here have been found, which might associate this strand with a beach-market of the Wigford or Marton type. Even so, given these Lincolnshire parallels, the combination of an abnormally large group of burial monuments in close association with a fine strand must now raise suspicions and should be researched further.

There is a similar lack of corroborative evidence for an early beach-market on the strand near the church at Kirklevington. Here the church containing a second outstanding

of shafts 2 and 3; nos 6 and 7 could be parts of a fourth shaft; no. 8 could be part of shaft 4, or of a fifth shaft; no. 9 seems to come from shaft 2 or 4; no. 10 could be part of shaft 2 or 3; nos 11 and 12 could be the heads for shaft 3, 4 or 5; no. 13 looks like the head for shaft 2; nos 14 and 15 are two grave covers; no. 16 could be part of 4 or 5, although it could be from another monument; nos 17 and 18 could have come from any of the above except nos 1, 14, and 15.

Fig. 10. List of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Yorkshire (Sources: Collingwood 1907; 1909; 1911; 1915; Lang 1991)

SITE NO. OF MONS.

York Minster	28	Catterick	2	Kirby Misperton	2	Saxton	1
York All Saints Pavement	1	Cawthorne	4	Kirby Moorside	5	Sherburn	6
York Holy Trinity Micklegate	2	Catwick	1	Kirkby Malzeard	1	Sinnington	7
York St Denis	1	Collingham	4	Kirkby Wharfe	4	Skipwith	1
York St Mary Bishophill Junior	4	Crathorne	5	Kirkdale	6	Slaidburn	1
York St Mary Bishophill Senior	15	Croft	2	Kirkheaton	2	Spennithorne	2
York St Mary Castlegate	7	Dewsbury	1	Kirklevington	15	Spofforth	1
York Clifford Street	1	Easington	5	Lastingham	3	Sprotborough	1
York Coppergate	3	Ecclesfield	1	Lead	1	Stainton	3
York Newgate	1	Ellerburn	4	Leeds	2	Stanwick	13
York St Mary's Abbey	1	Finghale	2	Levisham	5	Startforth	1
Aberford	3	Folkton	2	Little Driffield	1	Staveley	1
Adel	3	Forcett	5	Londesborough	1	Stonegrave	4
Amotherby	2	Fulford	1	Lowthorpe	1	Sutton upon Derwent	1
Barmston	1	Gargrave	4	Lythe	>30	Tadcaster	1
Barningham	2	Gilling West	4	Mexborough	1	Tankersley	1
Barwick in Elmet	2	Great Ayton	2	Middleham	1	Thoresby by Bolton Castle	1
Bedale	3	Guisely	3	Middlesmoor	1	Thornton	2
Bilton	3	Harrogate	1	Middleton	6	Thornton Steward	3
Bingley	2	Hauxwell	1	Mirfield	1	Thornton Watlass	1
Birkby	1	Helmsley	1	Mitton	1	Thorpe Arch	1
Birstall	1	High Hawsker	1	Northallerton	3	Topcliffe	1
Bradfield	1	High Hoyland	1	North Frodingham	1	Upleatham	1
Bradford	1	Holme on Spalding Moor	1	North Otterington	5	Wakefield	1
Brompton in Allertonshire	19	Hovingham	3	Nunburnholme	1	Walton by Tadcaster	1
Burnsall	8	Hunmanby	1	Nunnington	2	Wath	4
		Ingleby Arncliffe	3	Old Malton	2	Welbury	1
		Kildale	1	Ormesby	3	Well	1
		Kildwick-in-Craven	4	Oswaldkirk	2	West Witton	1
		Kippax	2	Otley	3	Wensley	2
		Kirby-in-Cleveland	3	Patrington	1	Whitby	1
		Kirby Grindalythe	5	Penistone	1	Wighill	1
		Kirby Hill	5	Pickering	4	Wycliffe	4
				Pickhill	4	126 sites	396 mons
				Ripon	2		

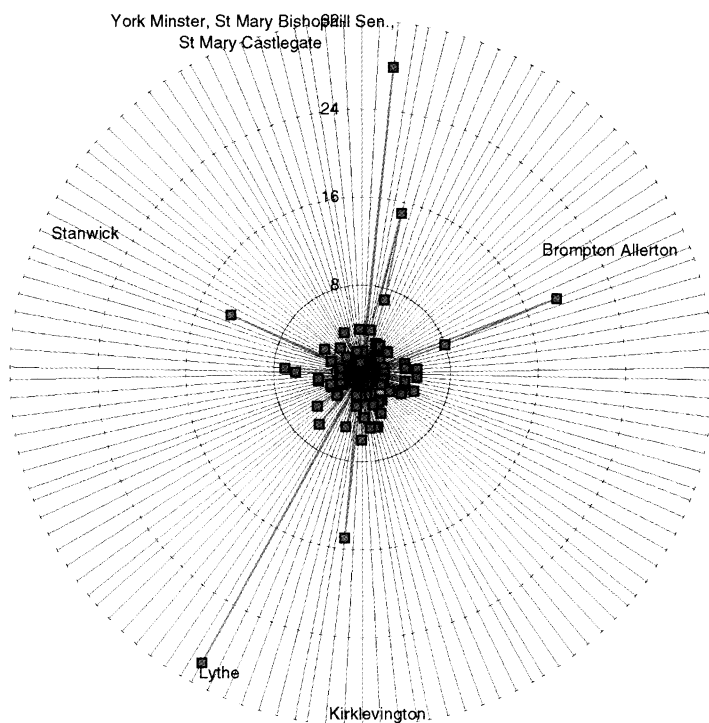


Fig. 11. Radar chart demonstrating sites with 'exceptional' numbers of Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in Yorkshire

Deiran sculpture collection (with a total of some ten to fifteen monuments)¹⁰ stands on a hill dominating the low-lying loop at the maximum tidal range of the Tees about one and a half miles to the north (fig. 9). Within this loop, and within the original parish of Kirklevington, lies Yarm—a planned town which was laid out with permanent structures and roads only in the twelfth century (Heslop 1983; Evans and Heslop 1985). Even if there was an early burial ground here, as might be indicated by the finding of a fine pre-Viking inscribed shaft (Haverfield and Greenwell 1899, 115),¹¹ it had gone by the early twelfth century, when St Mary's Yarm was founded as a parochial chapel

¹⁰ It is particularly difficult to estimate how many original monuments are represented by the twenty stones at Kirklevington recorded by Collingwood (1907, 344–52) and by Morris (1976). There are five cross heads and at least five of the remaining fragments seem to belong to monuments not represented by surviving heads, making, perhaps, a minimum number of ten monuments. However the total is more likely to be nearer fifteen.

¹¹ The find-spot does not encourage a close association with the site of Yarm as it was found 'serving as the weight of a mangle' in 1877 (Haverfield and Greenwell 1899, 115).

of Kirklevington to serve the newly reorganized settlement (Heslop 1990, 35; Daniels 1996, 112). The large group of tenth-century elite burials at the mother church at Kirklevington (Collingwood, 1907, 344–52; Morris 1976) seems to stand in the same relationship to Yarm as the near-contemporary burials at Marton did to the town of Torksey. Clearly, when our model is applied to Kirklevington, we can propose that the abnormally large elite here was composed, in part at least, of traders using a strand where Yarm now stands. Excavations in Yarm, however, have revealed no structures on the gravelly subsoil below the twelfth-century planned town, although significantly, a small number of ceramic finds of the tenth and eleventh centuries have been made (B. Vyner pers. comm.). It may be, therefore, that prior to the construction of a planned town at Yarm in the broad loop in the Tees in the twelfth century, the shingle strand served as a beach-market, which would have left few substantial archaeological features for recovery through excavation. The large collection of monuments at Kirklevington may indicate that the Hiberno-Norse mercantile elite were there in considerable numbers, however, and that they were buried in the pre-existing church indicated by the place-name.

The same topographical relationship between church and strand is replicated a few miles further up the Tees at Sockburn, on the County Durham side of the river, in the Wapentake of Sadberg; the only territory north of the Tees subject to Hiberno-Norse land-taking (Morris 1977; 1984). The church sitting on the cliff above the strand here also has a large collection of Hiberno-Norse monuments (Cramp 1984, 135–44). Unlike any of the sites we have encountered so far, Sockburn is, perhaps, the site of a pre-Viking ecclesiastical community, which was mentioned by Symeon of Durham (Arnold 1882, 83) in connection with the consecration of Archbishop Eanbald II in 796.¹² Even so, any church here had passed into private hands during the ninth or tenth centuries (probably during the period of Viking settlement), because between 990 and 1018 the church was donated by one Snaculf son of Cytel to the St Cuthbert community at Durham (Arnold 1885, 58). Sockburn, then, may have been more closely similar to Marton and Kirklevington, than it was to the churches in Lincoln, or Lythe, where the incoming trading elite were burying in a pre-existing church near the strand.

The largest group of Hiberno-Norse grave covers in Deira is in York itself, where approximately 65 monuments are represented (fig. 12). The largest single collection comes from the minster graveyard (with a total of some 28 monuments; Lang 1991, 53–78; 1995), and this is predictable, as one might expect the cathedral to be a focus for elite burials from all round the archdiocese. But no such explanation is available for the 24 stones representing about 15 original monuments at St Mary Bishophill Senior,¹³ which has, like St Mark's Lincoln, been totally excavated. Those excavations showed

¹² The monastery was at *Sochasburg*, which need not be Sockburn. Eric Cambridge (1984, 69), whilst not ruling out the existence of a monastery at Sockburn altogether, demonstrates several ways in which the church and site are dissimilar from other Northumbrian monasteries.

¹³ This is the total number of discrete Anglo-Scandinavian monuments defined by Lang (1991, 53–78). The number could probably be reduced by agglomerating fragments further.

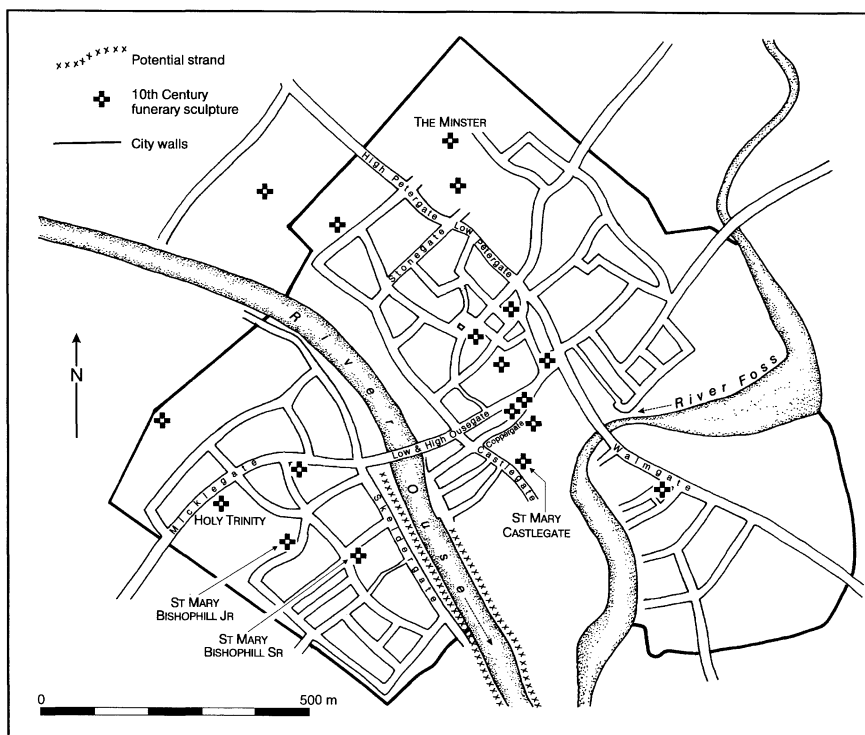


Fig. 12. Map showing distribution of sites with Anglo-Scandinavian monuments in York (Source: Lang 1991, fig. 2)

a similar foundation date, in the early tenth century, to St Mark's (Ramm 1976). Also like St Mark's (and apparently contradicting its soubriquet), this is not a senior church within the city's ecclesiastical hierarchy, although just such a senior church complex probably lay nearby, focused on the churches of the Holy Trinity, Micklegate, and St Mary Bishophill Junior (Morris 1986). Using the model we have been developing, we can suggest that St Mary Bishophill Senior may be another church patronized by the incoming Hiberno-Norse trading community of c. 914–54.

This proposal has some further significance for our understanding of the early topography of the city. Presuming again that the Hiberno-Norse traders lived and worked in the same parish, as we have presumed they did in Wigford, we should seek a strand somewhere in the vicinity of St Mary. Some years ago David Palliser (1978, 15) proposed that the street-name *Skeldergate* may derive, not from 'shield' but from 'shelf'. He took this to indicate that the hillside's profile was stepped, but the word 'shelf' can also refer to a sloping beach. Even today there is a stretch of beach along the Ouse at this point, and excavations on the western bank of the river and south of Ouse Bridge in 1972 and 1983 (Andrews 1984, 204) failed to find a quayside of earlier date than the twelfth century. Did early medieval York, like early medieval Lincoln and so

many other places, have an early strand and beach-market here on the south side of the Ouse, rather than a quayside? In a subsequent paper Palliser (1984, 105) proposed that this part of York was a planted settlement, laid out in a simple grid of streets adjoining a quayside. This area may exhibit the same sequence of development as the other market towns we have discussed. Like Torksey, Wigford, and Yarm, this part of York may have its origins in an open strand, used as a beach-market, which had urban order imposed on it when a grid of streets and properties were laid out. Using the scanty archaeological information available to him, Palliser (1984, 106) suggested that the street plan here may have been laid out in the late ninth century, and the excavation results from a site on the south-west side of Skeldergate, which was probably part of the grid pattern, subsequently showed that the first buildings were laid out in the late ninth or earlier tenth century (Donaghey and Hall, 1986). Intriguingly, Palliser also associates the establishment of the street grid here with the archbishops, who were, he maintains, maximizing their income from an important estate.

St Mary Bishophill Senior may not have been the only church patronized by the Hiberno-Norse traders of York, and now indicated by the large collection of elite graveyard monuments.¹⁴ The second largest collection, of seven monuments, at St Mary Castlegate, whilst not being quite large enough to be 'exceptional' (figs 10 and 11) might, nevertheless, indicate a second church of this type on the opposite side of the river. In addition to the graveyard monuments from St Mary Castlegate, a fragment from a dedicatory inscription survives, which tells us that the church was founded, not by a single elite family, but by three individuals who may not have been related. Epigraphically the inscription could be dated as early as the first half of the tenth century (Higgitt in Lang 1991, 100–101), and given that tenth-century graveyard sculpture occurs at the church this may be a more likely date than a later one. Unfortunately salvage excavations here in 1975 produced no clear evidence for the foundation date of the church or for its character (Hall 1987).

So far the trading places which seem to be indicated by large collections of Hiberno-Norse monuments have been of a single type, the beach-market, but it may be that some Hiberno-Norse traders also dealt with inland markets. Certainly our model might be invoked to explain the 'exceptional' collection of about 19 monuments at Brompton-in-Allertonshire (Collingwood 1907, 299–306; Lang 1984). The settlement at Brompton lies alongside the main road leading north-eastwards from the great inland market at Northallerton. The origins of the market at Northallerton, however, are not yet clearly understood. All Saints Northallerton has a collection of sculpture representing

¹⁴ The list in Lang (1991, 88–95) requires correlation with that in Moulden and Tweddle (1986, 25–8). Two fragments in Moulden and Tweddle do not seem to occur in Lang, and two further stones in Lang seem to be missing from Moulden and Tweddle. As with St Mark's and St Paul's, Lincoln, St Mary Bishophill Senior can be contrasted with the other tenth-century York church excavated in modern times, St Helen-on-the-Walls, Aldwark (Magilton 1980), which produced no Hiberno-Norse sculpture at all.

at least three Hiberno-Norse monuments, and it is known to have been a 'senior' church in the Yorkshire hierarchy (Morris 1988, 199, n. 49), not least because the site has also produced three fragments of pre-Viking sculpture (Collingwood 1907, 372). Furthermore the settlement at Brompton is *in* Allertonshire and is therefore thought to have been subordinate to Northallerton, at least in ecclesiastical terms (Morris 1985, 54, fig. 5.4). As with York and Lincoln, there is no reason to think that the Brompton sculpture denotes a senior church at this date; we have argued that it denotes, instead, the presence of an abnormally large elite. Is it possible, therefore, that Hiberno-Norse traders in a predecessor to the great high medieval market of Northallerton established their homes a mile or so away, at Brompton? The case for the Brompton monuments belonging to Hiberno-Norse traders at Northallerton market, however, seems less secure than most other cases we have investigated. A pre-Conquest origin for the market at Northallerton has yet to be demonstrated archaeologically, and, unless it was established as a merchants' enclave, it is not clear why our hypothetical traders should choose to bury a mile distant from the market when All Saints already had burial rights immediately adjacent. Even so, Brompton does seem to be another example of a large Anglo-Scandinavian elite burying in a communal church adjacent to a major market.

With approximately thirteen monuments, the collection at Stanwick (Collingwood 1907, 393–94; Morris 1976) is also 'exceptional' (figs 10 and 11).¹⁵ This church is also in a specialized location, set within the massive earthworks of the Iron Age *oppidum*. Although there have been several campaigns of excavation within the huge enclosure, there is little evidence as yet that the site was occupied during the tenth century, apart from the burial monuments themselves (Haselgrove, Lowther, and Turnbull 1990; Haselgrove, Turnbull, and Fitts 1990). Even so, the model we have been testing may suggest a colony of Hiberno-Norse traders at a hypothetical market here also, some of whom resided and were buried here.

Conclusions

Experience with the Lincolnshire material has permitted development of a model for the deposition of sculpted burial monuments by the political and social elite in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. The earliest of these monuments, mostly in Yorkshire, can be associated, specifically, with the Hiberno-Norse Viking kingdom of York in the first half of the tenth century. In the second half of the century, the Lincolnshire monuments, which are ultimately derived from these Yorkshire monuments, continued to demonstrate their remote Viking connections, but by this time it was quite possible for members of an elite who proclaimed their family's distant Hiberno-Norse background also to be a loyal local representative of the Wessex kings. In both counties we can argue that many of these collections represent single lords and their families, burying in their own

¹⁵ Further detailed work is also required at Stanwick to estimate how many original monuments the nineteen stones represent. There are certainly six and probably thirteen.

newly founded proto-parish churches, and given the apparent delay between such foundations in Lincolnshire as compared with Yorkshire, we might draw the conclusion that parochialization was dependent on the political authority of the local bishop. In Yorkshire the archbishop was a major political figure in the Hiberno-Norse Deiran state in the first half of the century, and that is when the sculpture seems to indicate a spate of churchyard foundations. Similarly, the sculpture tells of dwindling numbers of churchyard foundations in the second half of the century, when, following the re-unification, the archbishop no longer held his former political authority (Whitelock 1959, 73–6; Hadley 1996, 120). In Lincolnshire the bishop only became a figure of authority following the re-conquest by the Wessex kings, and the sculpture indicates that this was the main period of parochial foundations here.

Some concentrations of graveyard monuments are too large to be explained in this way. Furthermore, within this group of ‘exceptional’ collections, there seems to be a distinct sub-group of sites in both Lincolnshire and Yorkshire which may represent the monuments of elite traders at beach-markets. It is very tempting, therefore, to link the sculpture functionally to the trading sites, to suggest that it was the Hiberno-Norse themselves, with their extensive shipping interests around the coast and into Ireland, who actually founded the beach-markets, which the sculpture concentrations seem often to highlight. However, according to our current dating mechanisms, at York, Torksey, and Wigford, traders on the strands were already doing good business several generations before the first Hiberno-Norse burials were marked by stone monuments at the putative traders’ churches. The Hiberno-Norse, therefore, were probably not the founders, or re-founders, of the trading settlements in these places.¹⁶ These sites are surely gateway markets (Hodges 1982, 162–84), which owed their existence to topography rather than politics, and on present evidence, it is more likely that the concentrations of stones represent only one group in a long sequence of trading elites who turned up at these places. Unlike their predecessors, however, the Hiberno-Norse traders left an enduring signature in their sculpted graveyard monuments.¹⁷

¹⁶ The preliminary layout of buildings on the Coppergate site, on what was previously marginal ground, was dated quite closely to around 900–930—i.e., to the start of the period of Hiberno-Norse influence within the city (e.g. Hall 1988, 130). Coincidentally, or otherwise, this is also the generation of the capture of York by Ragnald and the army from the north-west, and it coincides with a major reform of the Deiran coinage, on which Thor’s hammer and the sword of St Peter were symbolically juxtaposed (Dolley 1978, 27). This is also the date of two burials at St Mary Bishophill Junior, which are orientated east to west in the Christian manner, but also accompanied by grave goods, following the pagan tradition (Wenham and Hall 1987, 83). The juxtaposition of Christian and pagan symbols on the coins and in the burial ceremonial echoes both the combination of Christian and pagan images on contemporary grave furniture, and the alliance between the archbishops and the new secular elite.

¹⁷ I am grateful to the following people for comments and assistance: the editors, Lesley Abrams, Blaise Vyner, Richard Hall, Alan Vince, and Paul Everson. Drawings by Dave Watt Graphic Services.

ABBREVIATIONS

- DB Domesday Book, in Morgan, P. and Thorn, C. eds, *Domesday Book, 31 Lincolnshire*, 2 vols, 1986, Chichester: Phillimore

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Viking Age Stone Monuments and Social Identity in Derbyshire

PHIL SIDEBOTTOM

This chapter argues that, rather than being merely a product of contemporary fashion, most Viking Age stone monuments both reflected and contributed to distinct social groupings, which may be revealed by analysis of their iconography and distribution (Sidebottom 1994). Secondly, it examines the circumstances which could have led to such a prolific display of stone monuments during the Viking Age, and suggests that it arose from the context of two cultures in contact.

The Problem of Chronology

The study area centres on the modern county of Derbyshire, but includes material from the surrounding region to place the monuments in the context of north Midlands sculpture as a whole. This is the first study to focus on regional groups of Viking Age sculpture in this district since that of Thomas Routh (1937) in the 1930s and Thomas Kendrick's (1949) more general overview in the 1940s. There has, however, been a more recent examination of Mercian sculpture by Rosemary Cramp (1977), but this concentrated on pre-Viking material (such as the friezes and panels at Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leics)), rather than the later Viking monuments. As such, the dating and identification of Viking Age material in the study area is long overdue for re-examination.

Before proceeding it is important to establish the distinction between types of sculpture. Firstly, there are the free-standing monuments: the crosses, slabs, and decorated tomb covers that form the majority of the corpus of stone sculpture in northern England. These appear to have functioned differently from the second type of sculpture, typified by the relatively few pieces of sculpture which are likely to have been part of

ecclesiastical decoration. Cramp (1977, 192–4) has also made similar observations in that she considered architectural sculpture to pre-date free-standing monuments in Mercia based on the lack of stylistic similarity. Analysis shows that, in this region, particular styles of architectural sculpture also appear to be limited to either a single location or to a close and restricted relationship between a parent and daughter house. This is demonstrated particularly well by the Breedon material. The decorative friezes and panels appear to be part of a close relationship between Peterborough Abbey and only three ecclesiastical foundations: Fletton, Castor, and Breedon itself (Clapham 1928; Cramp 1977). However, three fragments of a free-standing cross-shaft in Breedon church form part of a wide geographical distribution of monuments (Sidebottom 1994). This discussion will be limited to the free-standing monuments.

Pre-Conquest stone sculptures in the Derbyshire region have been dated, traditionally, to both before and after the Viking settlement. However, the majority appear to date to the Viking Age, as most decorative elements are regarded as Anglo-Scandinavian, displaying a mix of both indigenous material and art forms originating in Scandinavia (Cramp 1977; Sidebottom 1994). Indeed, the study area is no different in this respect from most areas of northern England. It is perhaps the proliferation of Viking Age stone monuments that causes the most difficulty in understanding their function, if one views them as nothing more than memorial monuments simply expressing the ‘fashion of the day’. It is difficult to accept that the Scandinavians, of their own accord, both embraced and promoted the erection of what are essentially Christian monuments whilst otherwise generally rejecting the authority of the Church. The erection of so many stone monuments, especially during the earlier part of the tenth century, seems to be contradictory. Even though dioceses were resurrected in the north Midlands after the conquest by the West Saxons, the ‘monastic revival’ appears to have had little impact in the former Viking-controlled regions.

The pre-Viking monuments of the north Midlands appear to be restricted to a small group situated in the Peak District and an even smaller number found elsewhere in the region. Many of these are assumed to pre-date the Viking settlement simply because they exhibit no Anglo-Scandinavian design elements—otherwise, they are, in reality, undated. Whilst it is certainly true that the Peak District does contain monuments that are significantly ‘non-Viking’ in their stylistic composition, the same cannot be said of all monuments in the region previously designated as pre-Viking.

Stone sculpture in the north Midlands has been regarded as having evolved in style from its assumed genesis in the early ninth century until the Norman Conquest (Kendrick 1938; Cramp 1977). One significant stylistic development resulted from the settlement by Scandinavians from the ninth century onwards: a new range of zoomorphic and abstract design elements which can be identified as distinctly ‘Anglo-Scandinavian’. The sculptures have been dated by their stylistic elements, not only to before, or after, the Scandinavian intervention, but to specific periods of fashion within each era. Not only does this depend on design elements (style), but it also follows a curious paradigm which involves the hypothesis of inevitable social decadence manifesting itself in the quality of the work (cf. Collingwood 1927; Kendrick 1938; 1949).

This idea of continually evolving styles has dominated the dating of pre-Conquest stone sculpture since it was first developed around the turn of the last century. Recently, some scholars have voiced their doubts about the validity of some of the dates ascribed to the sculptures (cf. Bailey 1980; Wilson 1984). Richard Bailey (1980, 53) has pointed out that the perceived decline in sculptural competence during the later stages of monument production (manifested by what we see as poor craftwork) may simply reflect the work of contemporary, but less-skilled, sculptors. The main reason for the survival of this dating method is the lack of confirmatory evidence (Cramp 1984, xlvi). As almost all pre-Conquest sculpture is either in the form of free-standing monuments, or fragments of architectural sculpture rebuilt into later structures, precise dating by contextual relationship may always elude us. To compound the problem, the study of stone monuments has developed its own language in which the words 'period fashion' and 'tradition' have become accepted standards, even though such concepts are inadequately demonstrated, if at all.

Any theory of stylistic evolution should include fundamental reference points before it can be accepted as a framework (even a rough one) for dating purposes. There should be a chronological start (and end) point where one sculpture, or group of sculptures, are demonstrably the earliest (and latest) and are datable by independent means. Despite William Collingwood's (1927, 26) conviction that the first monuments were produced at Hexham (Northumb) during the mid-eighth century ('no time or place could be more favourable for this particular development than the eighth century in Northumbria'), no hard evidence has been forthcoming. We also need to know when Scandinavian stylistic elements were introduced: Bailey's (1980) work in Cumbria argues that much Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture has been dated too early and that most monuments appear to have been introduced after c. 910. Another assumption is that design elements were constant throughout most, or all, regions of England and not subject to any particularly dramatic regional differences. Whilst notions of 'national culture' might have seemed tenable to late nineteenth-century antiquarians, is such an idea acceptable now? It is this issue, in particular, that suggests there may be an alternative explanation for the date and function of the monuments and leads us to examine whether many of the monuments were ever part of a sculptural 'tradition' at all.

There are problems, too, with the stylistic dating process itself, apart from its lack of reference points. Traditionally, the earliest free-standing monuments in the study area have been held to be those in the Peak District of Derbyshire (c. 800). They have been considered datable because they have strong iconographic parallels with supposedly 'early' monuments further north and possess no stylistic elements perceived as Scandinavian. However, the Peak crosses cause some confusion since, although regarded as 'Mercian' monuments (because all of Derbyshire has been assumed to have been in this kingdom), they appear to take their stylistic character from 'Anglian' Northumbrian models (Kendrick 1938, 164; Stafford 1985, 105; Cramp 1977, 218–19). There is little or no justification, on the stylistic evidence, for attributing the Peak crosses to Mercian art: the best parallels exist, ironically, at Hexham (Sidebottom 1999). Furthermore, it also seems strange (although, admittedly, not impossible) that the first

examples of Mercian free-standing monumental art in stone were restricted to a marginal region of such a great kingdom and not displayed at its principal centres such as Tamworth, Lichfield (Staffs) or Repton (Derbs). The possibility that the Peak may not have been a Mercian territory at the time of the erection of the crosses seems not to have been considered. Any assumption that this region was, and always remained, a Mercian satellite, relies solely on its inclusion in the Tribal Hidage, a document which is both undated and unprovenanced (Davies and Vierck 1974).

According to Kendrick, during the ninth century Mercian stone art became influenced by imported Carolingian design elements. As Mercia appears to have been the dominant kingdom at the end of the eighth century, and had documented connections with Francia, it seemed appropriate to Kendrick (1938, 164) that Mercia would be the recipient of new Continental styles at this time: 'it cannot have been until nearly the end of Offa's reign (757–796), or just after it, that the first of the surviving pieces of Mercian sculpture were carved'. Kendrick appears to have selected a historically convenient period, rather than anything more tangible, for the genesis of Mercian sculptural art, in exactly the same way that Collingwood had done a few years earlier for Northumbrian sculpture. David Wilson (1984, 80) has remarked on this rather dubious dating horizon and has expressed the reservation that the Mercian-Carolingian connection was unlikely to have had such a profound effect on English art, adding that this association may owe more to the general fascination with Offa than to evidence.

Furthermore, according to Levison, and others, Carolingian art was still in the process of development in the late eighth and early ninth centuries and was not a dominant art form. It developed as a result of the literary input from several areas, including those from English and Irish sources. But it was not until the tenth century that the Carolingian minuscule text became dominant and was introduced into English art, mainly during the period of monastic reform, as a peculiar English version of Continental art (Levison 1946, 135–52). It is quite feasible, therefore, that so-called 'Carolingian' influences identified in sculptural art may be a product, not of the 'Anglian' period, but of the so-called Anglo-Scandinavian Age of the tenth century. This influence on Anglo-Scandinavian art may well have derived from contact between the Vikings and the West Saxons and, in particular from a specific set of circumstances, explored later in this chapter.

Viking Age sculptural art in the Derbyshire region is said to be based on this previous 'Anglian' tradition. Yet, when investigated, the 'tradition' appears to be represented by one cross at Sandbach (Cheshire) and a fragment at Derby (Kendrick 1949, 77, 80). Similar difficulties arise with Kendrick's (1949, 80) account of the Mercian animal style which he said was adopted and transformed by the Danes: 'the pre-Danish St Alkmund's example at Derby comes first in the series'. However, he gives no further examples, and it appears that the earliest 'pre-Viking' stone art was identified by just one piece of sculpture that was fragmentary, blackened, and badly worn. Further fragments of stone monuments from the excavations at St Alkmund's during the 1960s (Radford 1976) show that the so-called 'St Alkmund Stone' is one of a number of similar monuments erected at this location. However, the whole corpus of St Alkmund's

sculpture compares better with a large group of Viking Age monuments ranging across the Trent valley region of the county (Sidebottom 1994).

The existence of a pre-Viking sculptural 'tradition' waiting to be adopted by the Vikings, is very much in doubt. If Kendrick and his contemporaries were confident in their stylistic dating process, Bailey's (1980, 74–5) remarks are both pessimistic and (one suspects) honest: 'with appropriate qualifications [...] it is possible to distinguish between Viking-period and Anglian sculpture. But in most cases it is not possible to give a narrower dating than this'. It is not difficult to agree with these remarks but one might also add that Bailey is only identifying two fundamental stylistic differences and only assumption divides them into separate chronological periods. The dating of stone sculptural art, especially in the Derbyshire region, appears to be based on uncertain foundations. Whilst it would be unfair to regard all such material as undated evidence, we have to be ready to accept that the traditional chronology for the monuments may be inaccurate: it is possible that pre-Conquest sculptural art in the Derbyshire region has a history spanning three centuries, perhaps even more. Alternatively, its production could have been limited to a relatively brief period of time. Already, doubt exists that the 'characteristically Mercian' stylistic attributes were in use before the tenth century which means that, apart from possibly the Peak group of crosses, there may not be any pre-Viking Age material in the region at all.

Regional Groups

The groupings of monuments in the study area are often referred to as 'schools of sculpting', where monuments, although distributed widely, appear to follow a set repertoire of design characteristics. They are termed 'schools' because it was thought, originally, that stone sculpture was the product of the great monastic houses wherein craftspeople would copy the work of a master mason, thus producing sculpture bearing the distinctive hallmark of the house. Until recently, 'schools', especially in the north Midlands, have never been fully examined, and their precise geographical and iconographic identity has remained vague.

The term 'school' could have different meanings depending on the extent to which the established works on the subject are taken as a summary of 'facts'. Similarities of design characteristics have been explained as either belonging to the same temporal division of a chronological process (i.e. the stylistic approach adopted by Collingwood and Kendrick), or as the product of a single workshop, or simply left as a vague association. More recently, Cramp reviewed the term 'school' and how it could be interpreted, concluding that a 'school' may exist where sculptures can be: 1) attributed to an historically known artist; 2) attributed to a central known figure from whom works are directed or copied; 3) seen to operate in a time/place division not necessarily linked to known individuals (folk art); and/or 4) styled according to socio-political divisions (Cramp 1977, 191–2).

The first two definitions can be eliminated since there are no records to support either of them, although it may be possible in some cases to identify the same hand(s)

at work. The drawback to the third definition, as Cramp acknowledges, is that, again, dating can be inaccurate and therefore misleading. Although the fourth definition offered by Cramp was not considered further in her paper, the notion of 'political' sculpture would appear to be important. If 'Mercian' or 'Northumbrian' styles can be identified (cf. Cramp 1977) then it follows that secular land-divisions may be important factors in the production of stone monuments and, in particular, their style. In one sense these 'national' differences in style also imply some form of ethnic identity, in its broadest sense. It has also been observed that Viking Age sculpture was influenced by secular interests marked by regular occurrences of pagan iconography (Richards 1991, 119). This secular input is said to have produced a tendency to divide sculpture into self-interest groups and hence more localized schools (Cramp 1975, 184).

Administrative Units in the North Midlands

In order to investigate any relationship between secular land divisions and the distribution of stone monuments, regional groupings (or 'schools') must first be firmly identified. This involves recording all the design characteristics found on pre-Conquest carved stones in the study area. In all, approximately three hundred pieces have been included in the analysis. The study area has distinct advantages since it contained several people-divisions (identifiable from Anglo-Saxon and later written sources) as well as the frontier between Northumbria and Mercia. The area also includes land belonging to the diocesan centres at Lichfield and (at some point in time) Leicester; the monasteries at Burton Abbey (Staffs), Breedon-on-the-Hill, and Repton; and several senior minster churches (for example at Dewsbury (Yorks), and St Alkmund's, Derby). Although these institutions were not all contemporary, all of them were operating during at least part of the traditional period of stone monument production.

The identification of Anglo-Saxon administrative units in the study area may be achieved by drawing on a variety of documentary sources. The main disadvantage to this approach, in common with all studies of pre-Conquest land divisions, is that the extent of territorial jurisdiction is seldom known and, in most cases, difficult to reconstruct with any degree of accuracy (Hadley 1996). Almost nothing is known of the administration within the areas of Viking control, including the division of land, until after the West Saxon conquest of the tenth century. Following this there appears to have been reorganization of political divisions, including the creation of the Five Boroughs which re-focused economic emphasis, and the eventual creation of the shires. We know that shires were introduced into the region before the Norman Conquest, but this appears to have been after the West Saxon conquest of the North in the tenth century, although most are not recorded until the eleventh century (Hart 1981, 115). In the initial phases of Viking settlement, internal land divisions may have been maintained, since, as Margaret Gelling (1992, 125) points out, internal boundary reviews were far from the minds of the Viking leaders in a time of potential warfare. Shires, she argues, were imposed by the West Saxons deliberately to disrupt the territorial composition of the north Midlands. Boundaries in this area 'show no respect for the traditional divisions

between the peoples who made up the composite kingdom of Mercia' (Gelling 1992, 141). Derbyshire, first recorded in 1048, is a good example of this hypothesis, created, as far as we can tell, from an amalgam of several different parts of former land divisions. Indeed, the south-western spur of the county, flanked by Staffordshire to the north-west and Leicestershire to the south-east, and containing outlying parcels of land, may be the result of the division of the former Mercian heartlands stretching between Tamworth and Repton.

The various available historical sources, such as the writings of Bede, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Tribal Hidage, charters, and the Domesday survey, are helpful in gaining some knowledge of territorial division during the pre-shire days of the area. Of these documents, only the Tribal Hidage provides us with the identity of many of the smaller Mercian units and any reconstruction of the geographical extent of these units is bound to be little more than guesswork. Some have argued that the groups listed in the Hidage were not even bounded by strict geographical limits (Davies and Vierck 1974; Gelling 1992, 140). However, the collection of tribute (which may be the reason behind the document) and tithes, inevitably must have imposed some sense of geographical territoriality, if none had existed beforehand. Some previous attempts to reconstruct the land-divisions in this area into defined territorial units (e.g. Hart 1977) are unhelpful since the majority of boundaries are based on little more than conjecture. In many cases, shire boundaries are used to complete the reconstruction, even though, as noted above, they are unlikely to have followed pre-existing lines of demarcation, especially in the Derbyshire region. Figure 13 shows the approximate land divisions indicated by the Tribal Hidage, based on Cyril Hart's (1977) analysis.

In the north Midlands, our knowledge of ancient land units is, perhaps, slightly better, and a tentative and very broad reconstruction of land divisions is tenable. Although not exact, there is some agreement on the general locations of many of the units listed in the Tribal Hidage (Brooks 1989, 160). We know, for example, that the *Pecsætna* must have occupied an area somewhere in, or around, the present Peak District of Derbyshire and possibly north-western Staffordshire. In addition to the mention of this group in the Tribal Hidage, charter evidence enables us to identify one small area in the south of the Peak District as part of this unit. A tenth-century charter describes Ballidon, near Bradbourne (Derbs), as '*in pago Pecset*' (Brooks, Gelling, and Johnson 1984, 145). To this can be added the analysis of material culture from the discrete group of mid-Saxon barrow burials clustered on the limestone Peak (Ozanne 1962/3; Barnatt and Collis 1996) signifying a composite cultural identity. Analysis of Domesday Book and Anglo-Saxon charters also enables some reconstruction of early land holdings in this region, indicating that the Peak District was once likely to have comprised one single multiple estate, arguably focused on the core region of the *Pecsætna* (Roffe 1986). What we cannot do is to define the exact geographical limits of the land division. Similar comments apply to the Mercian heartlands, but we can locate the core area to the Trent valley region, with some important centres known from documentary sources, for example, Derby, Breedon, Repton, Tamworth, and Lichfield. We also know that the River Trent, at some section in its journey to the Humber, once

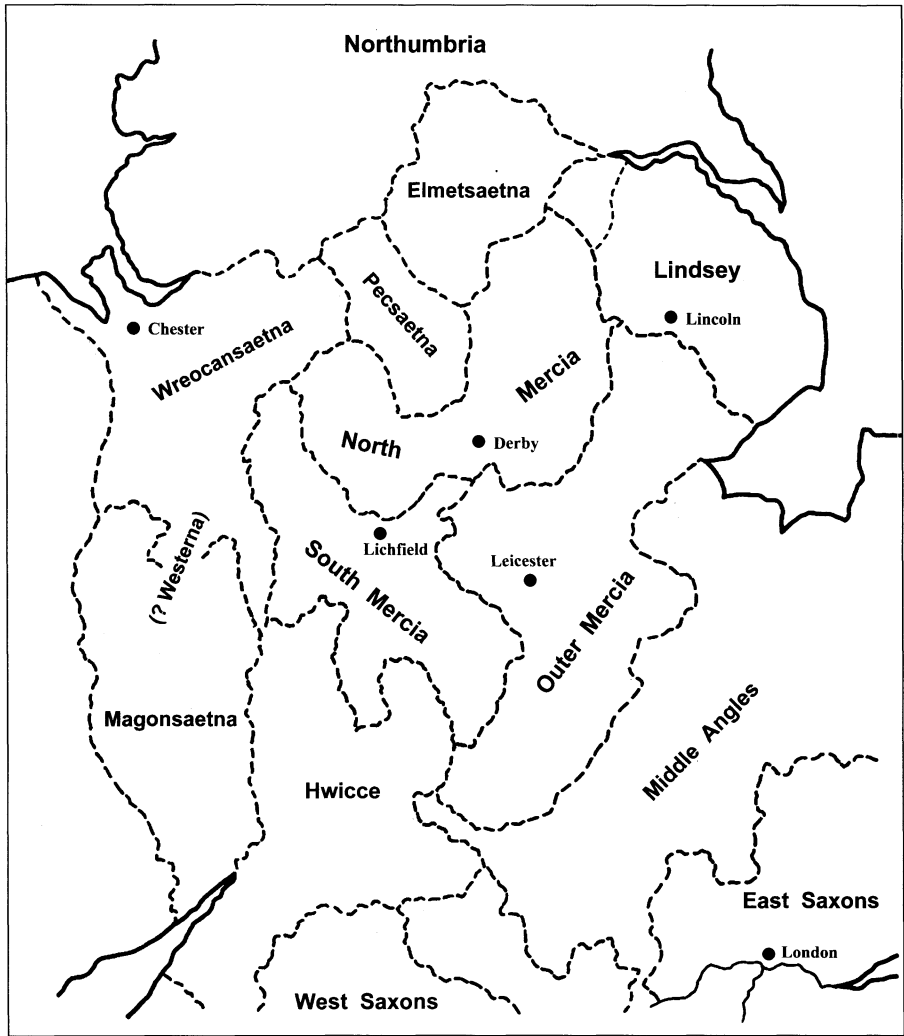


Fig. 13. Approximate boundaries of territories referred to in Tribal Hidage
(Based on Hart 1977)

formed an internal division within Mercia proper, although this may have been a short-lived boundary introduced by the Northumbrians during the seventh century (Brooks 1989, 161).

While some of the units included in the Tribal Hidage can be identified, broadly, to geographical areas, we cannot be certain that these divisions remained unchanged until the tenth or eleventh centuries, when shires were introduced. Some smaller units may have lost their identity, being absorbed into larger polities, and those which survived as internal divisions may have changed. Some land divisions may have remained reasonably static, while others may have been expanded. The unit of Lindsey, for example, appears to have expanded by the tenth century to become a larger polity based on Lincoln under the ultimate control of the York Vikings.¹

The above discussion has outlined the known political arrangements which existed in the region during the period of Anglo-Scandinavian stone monument production. We shall now turn to the identification of regional groups or 'schools' of monuments, which we will then relate to their possible socio-political content.

The Identity of Regional Groups of Monuments

How do we identify similar groups of monuments or 'schools'? Some analyses have relied on ephemeral observations—for example by only using form as a marker for commonality. This is the case with round-shafted monuments which are found grouped together in the north-west of England as well as in the west of the study area. But should the form of the monument override the decoration carved upon it? Similarly, much emphasis has been placed on figural scenes or zoomorphs as a key to understanding regional groupings, whereas interlacements and other seemingly innocuous decoration have largely been ignored. But can we be sure that what we perceive as important was equally so regarded by those who commissioned the monuments? The identification of regional groups, therefore, needs to be objective in that all elements of design, including form, figures, and 'innocuous decorations', should be considered equally.

¹ This arrangement appears to have survived throughout the Viking settlement with Northumbrian control extending from the old sub-kingdom into Kesteven, south of the River Witham, from c. 890 (Smyth 1975, 33). The geographical limits of the extended authority of Lincoln during this period are largely unknown but they seem to have been wide. For example, it is recorded by the tenth-century chronicler Æthelweard (Smyth 1978, 114) that King Alfred of Wessex negotiated with the York Vikings over land which is now in the south of Lincolnshire, although may at that point have included land in what became the county of Rutland, suggesting that the York Vikings had control over this area. In the early part of the tenth century, the Lincoln mint was producing coinage based on that produced at York, probably using a common moneyer (Smyth 1978, 8–9). Stafford (1985, 112) has also remarked that Northumbrian claims in north-eastern Mercia appear to have been strong during this period.

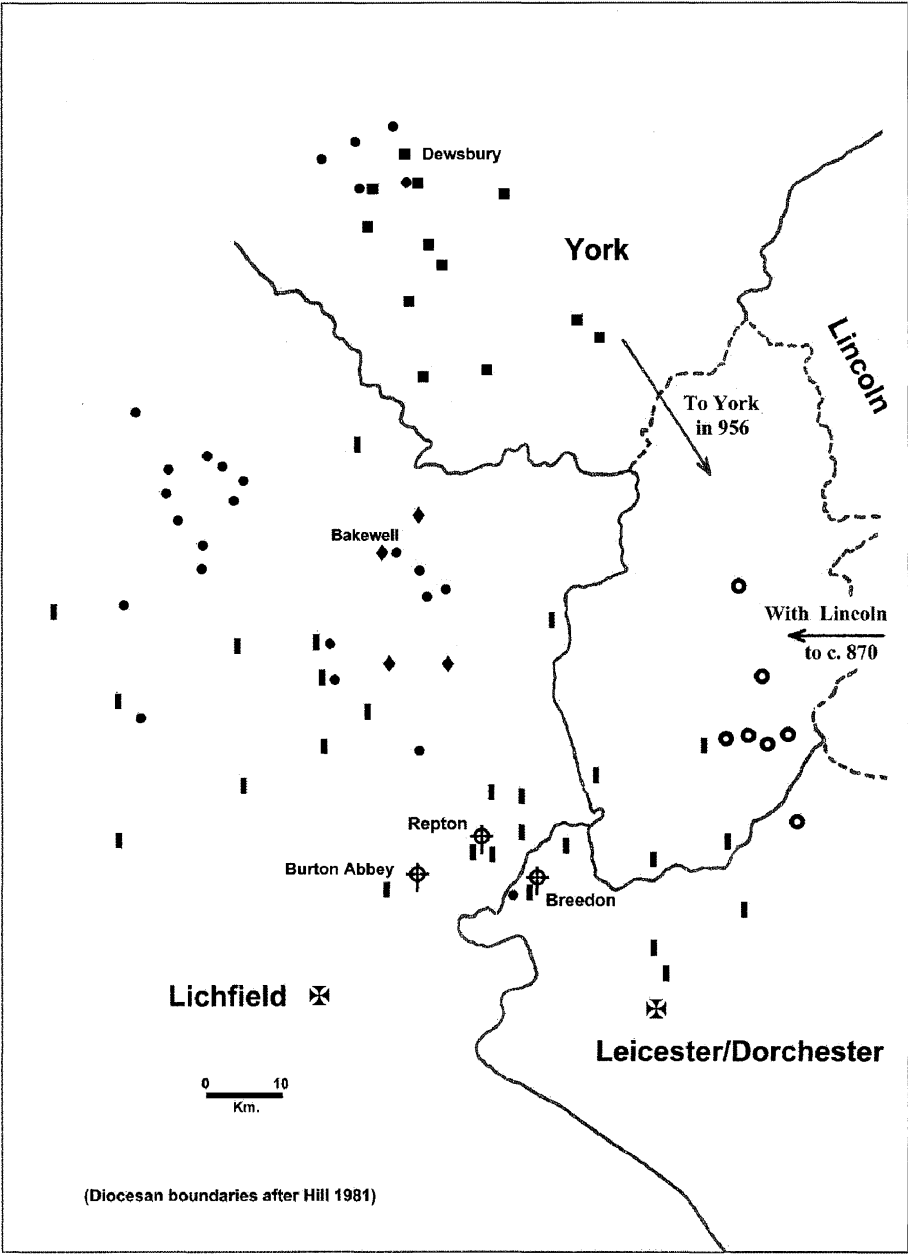


Fig. 15. Distribution of regional groups of monuments and approximate areas of diocesan boundaries

There is insufficient space here to give full details of the analysis adopted (for which see Sidebottom 1994), and the following is a synopsis of a detailed process of examination. Only a few decorative elements in the north Midlands have a wide distribution, and there is no particular concentration of them in any one area. Most design elements are, however, found to be concentrated in one particular area, and absent elsewhere. Furthermore, several different decorative elements are found to share the same geographical distribution and are usually present, together, on the same monuments. Commonality, therefore, can be identified from a range of geographically specific stylistic elements and not just from single attributes. It follows that the whole of the north Midlands can be divided into several iconographic groupings, each containing a unique repertoire of design elements with a distinct geographical integrity (fig. 14). Three of the five groups identified by this study are present in the county of Derbyshire. For convenience these may be referred to as the Peak group, the Trent Valley group, and the Pennine Fringe group.

The groups of monuments show that either they followed a rather unexpected pattern of chronological development, where the fashion of the day was adopted in one area and not in others, or that they may be identified with cohesive political or ecclesiastical units (or both). As far as diocesan jurisdiction is concerned, Lichfield does not appear to have been influential in the distribution of any group of monuments, since although it appears to have survived as a diocese during the Viking occupation (albeit with limited authority) it is likely that its influence remained only within the English half of Mercia. It is tempting to see the absence of stone monuments south-west of a line stretching roughly between Burton-on-Trent and Sandbach, as evidence for the English-Viking demarcation (Sidebottom 1996). Although it is thought that the diocese of York survived, or was resurrected, during the Viking occupation, the monuments of the Derbyshire region are significantly different from those in Yorkshire (Sidebottom 1994; 1997; Lang 1991). This also applies to any similar possible influences emanating from a fragile diocese in Lincoln or anywhere else, even directly from English-controlled lands to the south. The regional groups of monuments and the areas of approximate diocesan influence are shown in figure 15. If the monuments were influenced by any ecclesiastical office, this does not appear to have been diocesan (see Stocker, this volume).

As far as religious communities are concerned, Repton and Breedon-on-the-Hill and, to a lesser extent, Burton Abbey, are well placed in the distribution pattern of one of the schools of monuments (see fig. 16). However, this only applies to one of the three groups of monuments in the Derbyshire region. As far as monuments in the Peak District are concerned, we must conclude that if their production was ecclesiastical it must have been based on a religious community at Bakewell (Derbs). Another group of monuments appears to radiate from a cluster of sites to the south-east of Manchester. Within this group there is no known religious community, other than Bakewell, although the latter is far from central to its distribution pattern. If Bakewell was the production centre for both groups of monuments, then the disparity between the two areas of distribution is quite surprising. There are difficulties, therefore, in finding a

satisfactory correlation between known ecclesiastical centres and the regional groupings of free-standing monuments.

However, when the regional groups of stone monuments are compared with our understanding of secular units, there does appear to be a relationship. Not only is one group within the likely bounds of the kingdom of Northumbria, it also appears to be confined to what is understood to have been the old sub-unit of Elmet (cf. Faull and Moorhouse 1981). The distribution of a distinct group of monuments in the Peak District also coincides with the old division of the *Pecsætna* (cf. Roffe 1986). These two land units may not have survived as the territories of distinct people-groups by the Viking Age, nor were they necessarily thought of as distinctly separate entities. However, the tenth-century charter evidence from the Peak, referring to the land which was '*in pago Pecset*' (see above), suggests that this unit, at least, was still regarded as a distinct region. Similarly, the distribution of monuments in the Trent valley appears to be coterminous with the Mercian heartlands. It is especially interesting that the latter group of monuments, with the exception of those at Hope (Derbs), which is discussed in detail later, does not extend beyond the probable northern limits of north Mercia (i.e. between Dore and Whitwell (Derbs)) and appears to avoid the former land unit of the *Pecsætna*.

In the east of the study area there appears to be a frontier between those monuments forming a large regional group in the Trent valley and those of another group to the east (see fig. 14). This may be explained as a secular territorial jurisdiction controlled by the Lincoln Vikings, as discussed above, their territory being larger than that of the former unit of Lindsey. This extended area is likely to have included a considerable amount of land to the west of the Trent since this was, eventually, acquired by the diocese of York in c. 956 (cf. Hill 1981, 148), acknowledging the link between York and this region. There is also an indication that the political ties between the Lincoln and York Vikings may be manifested through iconographic links between their monuments. Some of the attributes of the Lincoln group appear to be present at York (see Stocker, this volume).

The shires of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire are not mentioned until 1016 (Stafford 1985, 141), and their formation may not have occurred before considerable reorganization of administrative districts which had existed since the initial Viking settlement. In which case, it is unlikely that either county was recognizable as a distinct unit of land before such reorganization. Similarly, Stafford suggests that the creation of the Five Boroughs as a single unit may have been a spontaneous alliance, formed by the West Saxon kings after their conquest of Mercia, to oppose a threat from the north. As a result, the administrative arrangements of the entire region were likely to have changed to respond to these new circumstances (Stafford 1985, 139). It was likely that these new arrangements were those which influenced the later formation of land divisions and shires, not the former organization adopted by the Vikings.

In dating the monuments much depends on whether there is any likely correlation between the Five Boroughs and the regional groupings. Monuments in the vicinity of the study area have been researched in detail, and there is no obvious iconographic division between the monuments around each respective borough. There is, however,

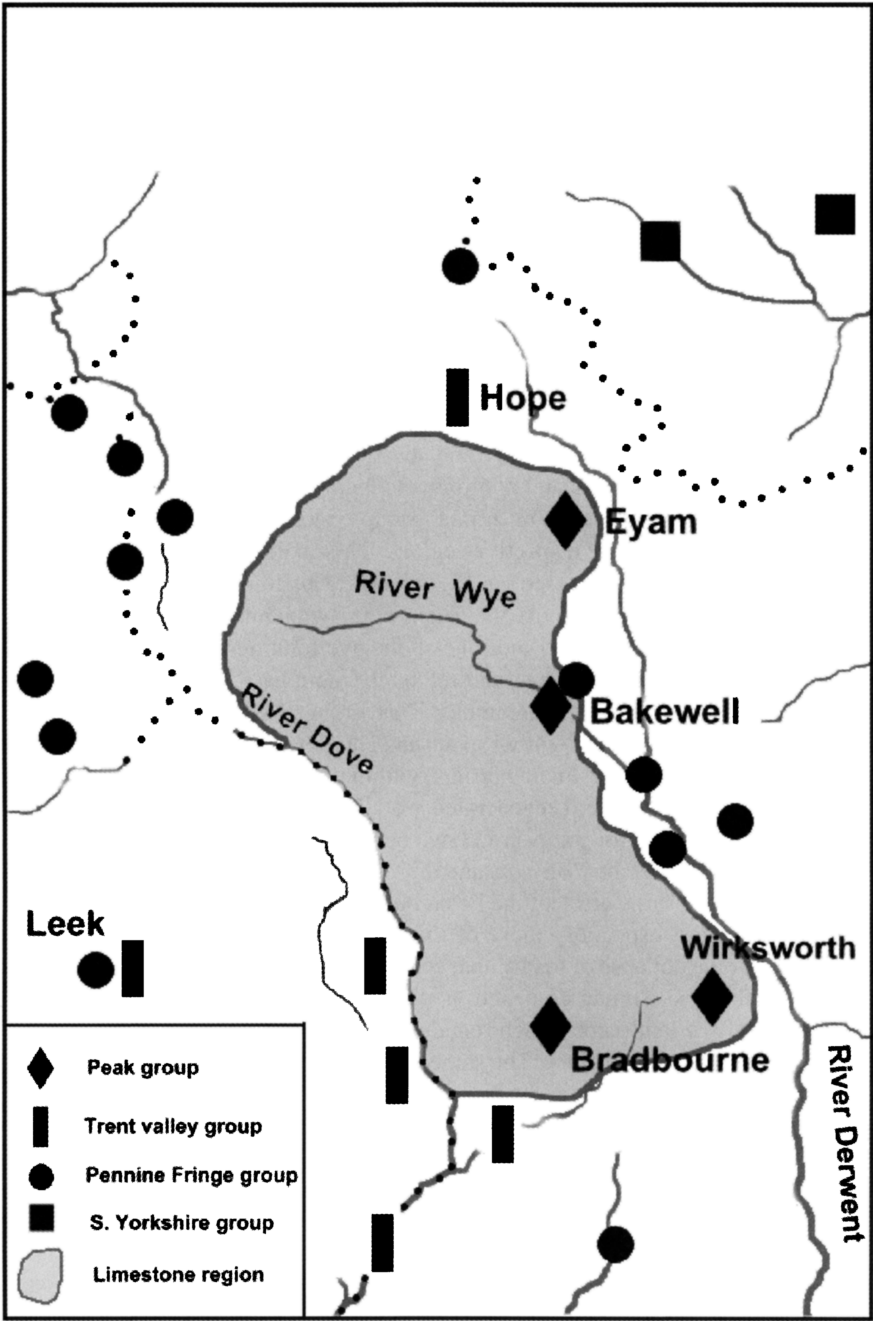


Fig. 17. Distribution of 'prime' group of monuments

a subtle iconographic sub-division within the Trent valley group of monuments where some minor design elements differ between those clustered around Leicester and those in the Derby region. Even then, this division may well have been based on a lesser division within Mercia, for example, that between northern Mercia and groups south of the Trent—a pre-existing land-division adopted into the pattern of Viking settlement. The relationship between Stamford and groups of monuments is unknown, although preliminary observations suggest that there is an iconographic division between the monuments on either side of the River Welland. Those monuments to the north of Stamford appear to be of the same style of monuments found in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and eastern Leicestershire, whereas those to the south (for example in the Peterborough region) seem to be an extension of the Trent valley group. This suggests that the stones were erected before the formulation of the Five Boroughs as a composite unit of administration.

All the regional groups, with one exception, appear to follow a distribution pattern coterminous with established secular land divisions, and this relationship between regional groups of monuments and approximate land divisions is shown in figure 16. Such groupings will be referred to as 'prime' groups since they appear to occupy prime agricultural land within their respective regions. This is illustrated best by the prime monuments of the Peak District (see fig. 17), which are distributed at sites in each of the four large pre-Conquest estates of the *Hamenstan* wapentake (Roffe 1986). Each monument site is located on the limestone shelf, overlooking river valleys, with immediate access to the better drained and relatively more easily worked terrain of the limestone region of the southern Pennines. This fits well with models advanced by Audrey Ozanne (1962/3) and Wendy Davies and Hayo Vierck (1974) for the activities of the *Pecsætna*, who, it is postulated farmed within the ecozone of the limestone Peak District, isolated by moors and regenerated woodland on less fertile soils. Thus, the monuments of the Peak group appear to have occupied this prime settlement zone.

This is not to say that the *Pecsætna* and those occupying this land unit in later times only utilized the limestone areas of the Peak, but it is likely that much of the surrounding 'marginal' areas, especially those of the poorly drained gritstone regions, were abandoned after the collapse of the Roman economy. Richard Hodges (1991, 116) also suggests that the post-Roman domestic mode of farming in the Peak resulted in the abandonment of the landscape which remained under-exploited until some re-colonization began in the tenth century. The same applies elsewhere, in that all of the prime group monuments are located on the better soils of the region.

It seems that areas of relatively poor agricultural land, for example those on the gritstone margins of the southern Pennines, were not central to the activities of those groups of people identified by prime group monuments. However, in addition to the prime groups, there is one other group which does not correspond to any known secular land-divisions nor to any frontiers which can be established either before, or after, the Viking settlement. Its monuments are generally small and are distributed (in the study area) from Cheadle (Cheshire) south-east of Manchester to Brailsford in Derbyshire with one outlier at Breedon-on-the-Hill. The distribution of this group also seems to be

unaffected by the operation of other regional groups operating in this area, overlapping not only at several sites with monuments of the Peak and Trent valley prime groups, but also found in areas beyond. Since this particular group of monuments does not appear to respect any known former land unit, nor an ecclesiastical division, one needs to look for other factors which may be responsible for the distribution pattern. There is also a similar group of stones situated on the Pennine foothills of West Yorkshire, which is beyond the scope of this chapter, but these comments apply equally to this group as well. These monuments are restricted to a certain topography. All are located on the more agriculturally marginal fringes of the southern Pennines, and all were erected in the gritstone valleys, including the outlier monument at Breedon, which also stands close to an area of gritstone outcrops.

The monuments of this seemingly anomalous group on the Pennine fringes have elsewhere been identified stylistically to the Viking Age (Cramp 1977, 192). But the people-group responsible for their erection appear to be the 'poor relations' of those who secured the more amenable landscapes. This suggests that they were not able to negotiate for land from a position of strength, nor were they able to declare a pre-existing land unit as their own. Elsewhere, there is another group of monuments whose location is similarly topographically significant. These are the hogback stones, also of the Viking Age. James Lang (1984, 89) noted that their distribution in Yorkshire occurs above the 300 ft contour, with 'rising moor or fell above', a description remarkably similar to the sites occupied by these Pennine fringe monuments. A good example of the restricted topography of hogback sites is shown by their relationship to farmland in the Vale of York. They are not found amongst the sculptured monuments in the rich agricultural plain, but at the fringes of the North York Moors (cf. Bailey 1980, 93). This is a further example of the distinction between prime group monuments and those of a different distribution pattern. Lang (1984, 89–90) noted that not only are hogbacks absent from areas with strong Danish connections, but also that they are found in areas where Norse settlement is indicated by place-name analysis (see also Stocker, this volume). Bailey (1980, 91–3) also argues that these are likely to be Hiberno-Norse monuments and notes the strong presence of hogbacks in Cumbria, an area which was extensively occupied by the Norse during the early tenth century. He has also suggested that, apart from the hogback, there are other particularly Norse types of monument which can be identified in this region.

Evidence for Hiberno-Norse settlement is often derived from place-names and indirect historical references. Gelling (1992, 137) suggests that a concentration of Norse place-names which occurs in the southern Pennines was the result of 'a small colony [of Hiberno-Norse] moving into an upland area which, like the northern part of the Wirral, may have been underpopulated at the time'. It is notable that Bailey (1980, 123) has identified a similar Norse group of sculptures in and around the Wirral where Norse place-names also occur. In the Pennine fringes of West Yorkshire, place-names suggest this was also an area subject to Norse settlement (Redmonds 1988, 3) and similar comments apply to Pennine Derbyshire where the Scandinavian name-elements are found in areas of poor agricultural land requiring drainage (Fellows-Jensen 1978, 257).

Similar comments apply to the gritstone marginal lands of north-eastern Staffordshire (Gelling 1992, 136). The distribution of such place-names coincides with that of the 'Pennine fringe' group of monuments. As well as the correlation which exists between place-name elements and this particular type of monument distribution, many of the diagnostic design elements of this group are the same as those found on monuments in the Wirral, Anglesey, Man, and Cumbria (on which see Bailey 1980, 70, 207–37). One plausible reason why these monuments, unlike the rest, do not relate to pre-existing land-units is that they were not erected by those involved in the initial process of the Viking conquest of the North. Instead, they appear to have been erected by small groups of Hiberno-Norse who, either by way of opportunism or, more probably, by necessity, accepted less favourable landscapes for their livelihoods than those of their neighbours. These monuments are referred to here as the *Pennine Fringe* group.

The prime groups of southern Yorkshire, the Trent valley and the Peak, appear to identify peoples bound, perhaps, by a common purpose in identifying and reinforcing their claim to existing territorial units. For example, those occupying the Peak are known to have survived as an identifiable and, possibly, semi-independent unit throughout this period. Probably the same is true of the old land unit of Elmet, containing a different group of prime monuments. The Trent valley prime group and that immediately to its east also may reflect a federation of individual sites with common purpose: those of the Mercian Vikings of the English frontier, and those of the Lincoln Vikings.

There is one monument in the north Midlands which appears to be directly linked to the period of conquest by the West Saxons and, at the same time, may provide an appropriate dating horizon for its erection and, possibly, that of other monuments within the same stylistic group. The shaft at Hope, in Derbyshire, is out of geographical context with the rest of the monuments of the Trent valley group (Sidebottom 1994; 1999). Its location may be explained by the acquisition of this land recorded in the early tenth century. Although there are a few other examples of estates being bought by the English from Viking settlers (Davies 1982, 803–4; EHD, no. 103), Hope is the only example in the north Midlands. A charter of 926 records that the estates at Hope and Ashford in the Peak were previously purchased by Uhtred from its 'pagan' owner in the first decade of the tenth century, shortly before Danish Mercia formally submitted to the West Saxons (Hart 1975, 103). The value of Hope, as a strategic centre for the English, is apparent from its Roman ancestry. The fort of *Navio* lay within the estate and vital Roman land routes, not only from Manchester and the north-west, but also from south Yorkshire and the East Midlands, converge at this point. The result of the agreement was that Hope came under West Saxon jurisdiction and, by the time of the formal conquest of the north Midlands, between the years 918–920, it would have been subsumed into Mercian lands.

The events that followed may allow the erection of the Hope monument to be placed into a specific period of activity. Hope was located in the land unit of the *Pecsætna*, as far as we can tell, near Viking Northumbria and close to the border between Viking Mercia and English Mercia. It may have been its ambiguous position which enabled the transaction between Uhtred and 'the pagans' to take place, notably

before the formal submission by the Mercian and York Vikings. By 911 the former *Pecsætna* land unit was largely in the hands of Uhtred, an English nobleman and probably one of the Bernician 'sons of Eadwulf' who submitted to Edward the Elder at Bakewell in 920 (ASC s.a. 920; Sawyer 1975, 34; Sidebottom 1999). When the iconography of the Peak group of crosses, essentially lacking in Scandinavian design elements, is viewed in this historical context, the relationship between style, land division, and political diversity in the north Midlands can be easily appreciated. The Bernician identity of the landholder, as well as the crosses, coupled with the lack of evidence of any other prime group monuments in the Peak, suggests that the so-called pre-Viking monuments of the Peak may be reflecting their non-Viking ownership, rather than their chronology. In which case, some credibility must also be given to a Viking Age date for the Peak group of prime monuments.

At the time of the transaction involving Uhtred, it is reasonable to conclude that the rest of the Peak, south of Hope, was under separate control, an area which was not annexed by the West Saxons until 920 (ASC s.a. 920). This is shown by the Peak group of monuments, through the limestone area south of the Hope valley, as far as Wirksworth (Derbs) and Bradbourne, and identified as a composite unit through a single and geographically cohesive group of stones. Even if one accepts the traditional dating of the Peak monuments as earlier than the shaft at Hope, then we are still left to explain the notable absence of any other prime group monuments from the rest of the Peak. However, by 926, Hope had been subsumed into the rest of the Peak holdings by the Bernician, Uhtred (Hart 1975, 103). If the monuments identify secular landholdings of the early tenth century, then one would expect all prime monuments in the Peak, including those in the Hope valley, to be the same if they were erected after 926. In which case, the distribution of the monuments in the Peak suggests that they identify a very specific and transitional period of land holding which can be tentatively attributed to the years between c. 911 and 926. Elsewhere, the monuments of all prime groups reflect a pattern of secular land control that existed before various reorganizations were introduced by the West Saxons, following the conquest of Viking Mercia. Examples of which include the amalgamation of the Five Boroughs (after which Lincoln appears to have lost its separate identity), the annexation of (what was to become) Nottinghamshire by the diocese of York and, eventually, the introduction of shires. Whatever motives lay behind the erection of the monuments, a likely dating horizon for most of its production lies between c. 911 and 950, after which signs of the West Saxon reorganization began to emerge.

Function

Why were so many stone monuments erected during the Viking Age of the Derbyshire region? Since the most likely dating horizon for the production of, at least, the majority of the monuments is between c. 911 and c. 950, we need to consider what circumstances during these years could have led to such an unprecedented display. Under what sort of circumstances would groups of people in the north Midlands both want to reinforce

territorial limits and, at the same time, proclaim their acceptance or affirmation of Christianity? All of the groups of people responsible for the erection of the stones appear to be demonstrating a conspicuous acceptance of Christianity. It may be argued that the Vikings had accepted this religion long before the conquest by the West Saxons, but the evidence for this is, at best, doubtful, and the apparent religious fervour, necessary to erect so many Christian monuments, is difficult to reconcile (compare, however, Abrams, and Stocker, this volume). However, the erection of the monuments may show that, at some particular time, the acceptance of Christianity needed to be publicly displayed.

The West Saxon kings developed their administration on Frankish lines where king and Church, in tandem, became the dominant power (Loyn 1984, 82, 89). To submit to one, necessitated submission to the other. This is clearly seen in Guthrum's submission to Alfred in 878 where his baptism was central to the peace forged (Asser c. 56; see Kershaw, this volume). Similar conditions appear to have been imposed on other groups brought under West Saxon overlordship since they were required to 'renounce idolatrous practices' (ASC s.a. 927) and to accept Edward the Elder as 'father', as well as overlord, as a condition of their surrender (ASC s.a. 920). Although the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is silent on the mechanism by which the Vikings were supposed to demonstrate this commitment to the religion of their overlord, the erection of stone crosses would seem an appropriate means. This also coincides with the postulated dating horizon of the Hope monument of between 911 and 926—and is, of course, the period of West Saxon advancement and conquest of the Viking-controlled North, the most significant political event of the tenth century.

The memorial function of the monuments may have implied more than the commemoration of a loved-one and, as Julian Richards (1991, 128) suggests, they may have been used to draw attention to inheritance claims. Such a function for stone monuments has also been suggested in Scandinavia where, according to Klaus Randsborg (1980, 29), some inscribed stones appear to be statements of succession and sometimes of the ownership of land. During the process of conquest by the West Saxons, the tenure held on land by the Viking groups would have become fragile to say the least. However, there were previous examples, notably those negotiated between Alfred and Guthrum (EHD, no. 34; see Kershaw, this volume), which showed that political settlement could be arranged. It was possible to retain control over land, subject, of course, to the conditions imposed by the West Saxon king. In Guthrum's case, he was obliged to demonstrate a public acceptance of West Saxon rule through his baptism into the faith of his overlord, the latter acting as his sponsor (godfather) to ensure that their relationship was established and witnessed in the public arena.

The imposition of Christianity on non-Christian leaders had several effects. The right to rule implied by ancestral claims to the Germanic hero-gods was destroyed. This had happened several times in the past: for example, when the leaders of Kent imposed their religious superiority during the seventh century, or when Mercia was subject to conditional surrender to Northumbria following Oswy's military triumph a little later (Campbell 1982, 53–61). As well as this diminution of individual power, the Church

could also be enlisted by the overlord as a means of political and social control. This same set of conditions appears to have been part of the settlement agenda in 920 at Bakewell when Edward was also to be accepted as 'father' to the groups of the Viking-controlled North. Thus, the acceptance of Christianity was one of the conditions imposed on the various groups of the North which required a public display.

The crosses and their kindred monuments may have been erected over a relatively short period following the conquest of the Viking North, to demonstrate, publicly, the acceptance of the West Saxon overlord and his Church. As well as serving as secular memorials, claiming rights to succession, their symbolic composition was also intended to construct a sense of secular union correspondent to pre-existing land units. Groups of Hiberno-Norse, erecting monuments on the Pennine fringes, expressed, not a domination of a political landscape, but a common interest, that of utilizing a particular type of landscape rather, perhaps, than involving any notions of Norse origins. The use of stone was an unusual medium for the indigenous and Viking groups of the North (but an essential one to the Roman Church) and was part of this expression of common interest. The stones identified this acceptance of West Saxon overlordship and Christianity by each estate-holder in the north Midlands. Outwardly, the proclamation of Christ was publicly displayed, but at the same time the stones were also used to express what was seen as a legitimate claim to land tenure. Whether these same identities pre-existed the West Saxon conquest is unknown, but in any case they may have been irrelevant to the new circumstances of 920. What was important was that established political identities were proclaimed as composite units of tenure. The distribution of the various regional groups of monuments may well testify to this and to the uncertainties that lay ahead for the groups of the North. Perhaps through these valuable artefacts we glimpse a brief moment of social organization, one which was to end when the West Saxons chose to disrupt this pattern in the years that followed.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ASC Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in G.N. Garmonsway trans., 1953, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, London: Dent
- EHD *English Historical Documents I, c. 500–1042*, Whitelock, D. trans. and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode
- S Sawyer, P.H., ed., *Anglo-Saxon Charters. An annotated list and bibliography*, London: Royal Historical Society

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Anglo-Scandinavian Metalwork from the Danelaw: Exploring Social and Cultural Interaction

GABOR THOMAS

New interpretations of the Scandinavian impact on England in the ninth and tenth centuries have been hampered by the relative lack of new material available to archaeologists of the period. There have been few recent excavations of Viking Age material in England, and, as Julian Richards and Richard Hall point out in this volume, even those sites which have long been labelled as Viking or Scandinavian—such as York and Ribbleshead (Yorks), for example—have few material remains that may securely be associated with the newcomers. Furthermore, the two most well-known recent excavations of Viking Age sites at Repton and Heath Wood, Ingleby (Derbs) (Halsall, this volume) have provided insights that, while invaluable, concern sites about which much is already known, from documentary sources and previous excavations, respectively. There is, however, one class of evidence that while little publicized may hold great potential in furthering our understanding of the period: Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork. Not only has it been discovered in relative abundance in northern and eastern England but it comes from a great diversity of sites and contexts. In a recent paper, Hall (1994, 38) commented that this metalwork, if properly identified, analysed, and published, is likely to provide a torrent of information about the location of contemporary occupation sites, and about the mechanics of metalwork production and distribution. This chapter argues that a study of such artefacts may have even more to reveal, in particular about the nature and process of cultural assimilation between the Scandinavian immigrants and local British populations.

The Evidence and the Issues

The following discussion is based upon ornamental metalwork, covering minor objects such as dress-accessories and jewellery. These are generally regarded as originating from one of two main sources. The first group is considered to be of indigenous Scandinavian origin carried to England either by Viking immigrants, or through trading networks. The second group of material, and commoner of the two, is considered to be a product of a distinct Anglo-Scandinavian cultural milieu which existed in areas of Viking colonial activity. This metalwork can be readily distinguished on the basis of its morphological and decorative repertoire which employs motifs derived from the contemporary Scandinavian art in debased or stylized form, often within novel compositions influenced by local Anglo-Saxon or Insular artistic traditions (Graham-Campbell 1989, 73; Fuglesang 1986).

A discussion of dress-accessories such as brooches and strap-ends offers a contrast to studies of Viking Age sculpture which have been a traditional focus of stylistic analysis (e.g. Bailey 1980; Sidebottom, and Stocker, this volume). While both media share certain styles and motifs indicative of Scandinavian influence, their differing properties, both physically and contextually, may have influenced a specific range of styles and motifs tailored to each. Sculpture, for example, being a permanent feature in the landscape may have served to signify and unite wider social and regional identities (Stocker, and Sidebottom, this volume). Personal items such as jewellery, however, may reflect more localized patterns of social expression influenced by individual comparison and self-identification (see Weissner 1989).

Current Research and the Nature of the Evidence

Before beginning a more detailed discussion of the characteristics of this metalwork, a consideration of some of the factors influencing the discovery and subsequent interpretation of the data is required. First, we need to consider the implications of interpreting material which is primarily discovered by metal detectorists. Although such stray finds may lack the associative dating criteria linked with artefacts from stratified archaeological contexts, this source has an interpretative benefit. As chance discoveries, the distribution of such artefacts serves to counterbalance the potential bias associated with specialized deposits, such as burials and hoards, and also with the activity of archaeologists.

During the past twenty years, the eastern counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, and eastern Yorkshire, have produced substantial quantities of late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork in comparison with the rest of England. This is, of course, related to patterns of land-use in those counties and also to a high level of co-operation between the archaeological and metal-detecting fraternities, resulting in a high incidence of reporting and recording by local museums and archaeological services (see Dobinson and Denison 1995).

Recent work in these regions has highlighted the potential of these metal-detected finds in aiding an interpretation of the scale and nature of Scandinavian settlement and

assimilation. Pivotal has been the research carried out by the late Sue Margeson (1996; 1997) who published two recent articles re-assessing the scale of Viking settlement in Norfolk in light of this new evidence. Similar regionally directed research has been, and continues to be, carried out elsewhere in northern and eastern England, especially in Lincolnshire and eastern Yorkshire (Richardson 1993). The fact that the bulk of this work remains unpublished however, is a constraining influence on the present study which necessarily relies upon material being in print or otherwise publicly available.

Although modern-day factors determining recovery may contribute to an over-representation of Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork in the eastern Danelaw, studied on an internal, intra-regional basis, this metalwork does have archaeological significance, supplementing the frustratingly meagre amount of information to be gleaned from other archaeological sources such as sculpture and excavation (see Graham-Campbell 1989). On the basis of the quantity, distribution, and the poor quality of much of this metalwork, recent research contends that the majority of the Scandinavian immigrants were of low status and that settlement was fairly widespread and dispersed (Richardson 1993, 37; Margeson 1996, 48, 55; 1997, 6–7). At a general level the distribution of Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork also accords with place-name and linguistic evidence for areas affected by Scandinavian settlement, with especially high concentrations in regions such as the southern fringes of the Yorkshire Wolds. Kevin Leahy (pers. comm.), for example, substantiates this interpretation of the significance of the correlation between the distribution of Anglo-Scandinavian place-names and metalwork in Lincolnshire by comparing specifically Anglo-Scandinavian material with contemporary Anglo-Saxon finds. He argues that the latter act as a control with a general widespread distribution over the entire county, which contrasts with the more isolated pockets of Scandinavian place-names and metalwork in eastern Lincolnshire. In Norfolk the combined evidence provided by place-names and Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork has been interpreted as evidence of dispersed settlement penetrating well inland. Moreover, comparison of the Norfolk distribution with recent survey work, including excavation and metal-detecting in Denmark, indicates that this pattern was also characteristic of settlement in the Viking homelands where rural settlement is also marked by scattered and widespread finds (Margeson 1996, 52).

This recent interpretation based upon the metalwork evidence challenges the revisionist view based upon other forms of archaeological and linguistic evidence that settlement was by a small, relatively nucleated Scandinavian elite, as has been suggested for counties such as Norfolk (Williamson 1993, 107). Yet, while this newer hypothesis concerning widespread settlement goes some way to explain the quantity and distribution of this metalwork, the direct correlation between the status and form of an object and its owner is perhaps too simplistic. One should consider a range of factors underlying the production and consumption of metal artefacts and the ways in which they may, or may not, have been used to signify ethnic identity. First, in Anglo-Saxon England the tenth century is marked by a reduction in the production and circulation of precious metal dress-accessories. This period also witnesses an expansion in the use of base metals to produce humbler counterparts to the silver dress-accessories common in

the preceding century. Although this may in part have been related to economic factors, another contributing factor to consider is that wealth was now being expressed in different ways, for example through property ownership, church-building, and so on (Hinton 1975; Williamson 1993, 154–61; Faith 1997, 153–77). In some parts of northern and eastern England, wealth and status were also being expressed through the commissioning and display of stone sculptures (Sidebottom, and Stocker, this volume). Hence, one should be wary of necessarily equating base-metal artefacts and dress-accessories with low-status Scandinavian immigrants.

Second, while the metalwork may have something to reveal about the scale of settlement in the areas where it is found, a comparison of a distribution of these finds and other types of evidence, primarily linguistic and place-name, is rendered more complex if one begins to consider whether it is valid to assign ethnic origin to the inhabitants of a region on the basis of metalwork and material culture alone. While it may be acceptable, for purposes of identification, to classify *artefacts* as Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, or Anglo-Scandinavian on the basis of their stylistic attributes, it may not be so appropriate to classify people in this manner. Moreover, the significance of the correlation between Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork and Scandinavian place-names must be mediated by a recognition that those place-names were coined over a long period of time, and not solely the initial phases of settlement, and often formed in the context of contact with the indigenous population, as hybrid names and Scandinavianizations of Old English names attest (Fellows-Jensen 1994; Hadley 1997, 73–4). Finally, is it valid to try to reconstruct meaningful distributions of metalwork at this level of acuity? Is it valid, for example, to compare the distributions of specifically Anglo-Saxon metalwork with Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork in the reconstruction of complementary patterns of settlement? Assemblages from some excavated and metal-detected sites in northern and eastern England are notably characterized by the presence of *both* Anglo-Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon dress-accessories, indicating the likelihood that a choice existed as to which form individuals used.

The variety of metalwork discovered at a cross-section of sites in northern and eastern England is worthy of further attention. Anglo-Scandinavian levels at York, for example, have produced examples of explicitly Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork (Roesdahl 1981, 108–9; Hall, this volume). Perhaps this eclectic cultural mix is reflective of the heightened levels of cultural integration and assimilation existent in Viking trading communities, as evidenced elsewhere in the Viking world at settlements such as Dublin (Clarke and Ambrosiani 1991, 102–6). One occasionally witnesses a similar range of artefacts at rural sites. Cottam on the Yorkshire Wolds, for example, has produced a large collection of mid to late Anglo-Saxon dress-accessories with a smaller contingent of Anglo-Scandinavian artefacts including several strap-ends (see below), a Jelling-style disc-brooch (Haldenby 1990, fig. 5) and two miniature bells considered to be of Norse origin (Haldenby 1990, fig. 6.1; Haldenby 1994, fig. 3.1; Richards, this volume, fig. 29). However, this is by no means a universal pattern as many of the assemblages associated with settlements in northern and eastern England reflect little or no Scandinavian influence. Flixborough

(Lincs), a site in the heart of the regions settled and controlled by the Scandinavians, was continuously occupied from the seventh century through to the twelfth century but has nothing in its ornamental metalwork assemblage that might be described as reflecting Scandinavian influence (Chris Loveluck pers. comm.). Again the evidence suggests that the influence and assimilation of these external cultural traits across northern and eastern England was both localized and dispersed.

Having said this, assessing any regional pattern in the influence of Scandinavian metalwork is complicated not only by the declining popularity of several classes of dress-accessory during the tenth century but also by the nature of the surviving evidence. In a recent paper reassessing the status of the so-called 'productive sites', such as Cottam, in the hierarchy of Anglo-Saxon settlement, Julian Richards (1999) focuses attention on the differential levels of sampling associated with excavated and metal-detected sites. One conclusion reached by his study, which has particular relevance to the current discussion, is the difficulty of making accurate comparisons of site function and status based upon artefactual assemblages from sites sampled by these different techniques. By extension, assessing localized patterns in the distribution of Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork by comparing intra-sites assemblages is likely to be similarly biased.

Of interest is the fact that the corpus of ornamental metalwork from northern and eastern England also includes a significant quantity of contemporary Winchester-style material. In addition to the finished products representing this artistic and cultural tradition, metal detector finds also include lead-models and/or trial-pieces, suggesting that Winchester-style metalwork was not only being circulated but also manufactured within the region. This new evidence challenges the traditional view that the style was largely restricted to southern and south-eastern England (Wilson 1984, 160), and it also highlights the mixed cultural and artistic milieu that must have been in existence in the Danelaw. This undoubtedly has a bearing on the potentially complex range of affiliations and identities being expressed in the region through the medium of dress at this time.

The Characteristics of Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Metalwork Discovered in the Danelaw

The second half of this chapter focuses on the features of the metalwork in more detail. Dress-accessories and jewellery comprise the majority of Scandinavian metalwork discovered within northern and eastern England. Excluding the limited quantity of jewellery discovered in a small number of Viking burials (see Margeson 1997, 15–17, figs 15 and 17), the bulk of the material of Scandinavian origin discovered in northern and eastern England is comprised of a range of base-metal brooch types which were mass produced at sites such as Birka (Uppland, Sweden) and Hedeby (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany) and subsequently distributed widely throughout the Scandinavian colonies. The types discovered most commonly in the Danelaw include a trefoil variety often decorated with stylized foliate motifs, a lozenge form with terminals depicting

Borre-style animal heads, and convex disc-brooches decorated with Borre- or Jelling-style decoration (Margeson 1996, fig. 4; 1997, fig. 21). The Scandinavian material also includes a small number of artefacts, such as Thor's hammer pendants, which explicitly relate to pagan beliefs (Margeson 1996, 50–2). Considering the rarity of these objects and the relative lack of other evidence for pagan practices in the areas of Scandinavian settlement (see the chapters by Abrams, and Stocker, this volume) it is likely that such objects were associated with the first wave of émigrés during the last quarter of the ninth century (although it should be noted that settlement, whether directly from Scandinavia, or of the former raiding bands may have been a protracted event: see Innes, this volume).

The corpus of Scandinavian finds from the Danelaw is far outweighed by metalwork attributable to an Anglo-Scandinavian metalworking tradition which developed during the latter ninth and tenth centuries. Apart from strap-ends, which will be discussed below in more detail, a series of small base-metal disc-brooch best illustrate the fusion of craft traditions which characterize Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork. Although very similar in dimensions and overall form, disc-brooches of Scandinavian origin can be differentiated from the contemporary Anglo-Saxon series on the basis of their dished profiles and fastening mechanism which incorporates double attachment lugs often in tandem with an additional loop for suspending strings of beads, the latter being a standard adornment for female dress in Scandinavia (see Margeson 1997, fig. 16). The Anglo-Scandinavian group combine the morphology of the Anglo-Saxon series with a distinctive and highly standardized swastika design, consisting of a central losenge and four looping tendrils, which is derived from the repertoire of Scandinavian Borre-style art (Margeson 1997, fig. 16). Their focussed distribution indicates an East Anglian source for their manufacture, one possible production centre being Norwich, where examples have been found in tenth-century contexts excavated within the city (Richardson 1993, 31–2). While it is clear that these brooches were the products of insular craftsmanship, assessing the origins of their distinctive decoration is more complicated, a problem often encountered with Anglo-Scandinavian art (Richardson 1993, 32–4).

To conclude the descriptive analysis of the data, discussion will draw upon the author's research into Late Saxon and Viking Age strap-ends. A common class of ornamental metalwork in Anglo-Saxon England, certain regions of Scandinavia, and Carolingian Europe, the strap-end was a multi-purpose item primarily used in conjunction with dress-fittings such as girdles, baldrics, garters, and spur-straps. In Anglo-Saxon England the latter ninth and tenth centuries witnessed a major transition in strap-end usage involving the declining use and eventual replacement of a standardized and highly ubiquitous Middle Saxon type characterized by a convex-sided plate with a split attachment-end and a zoomorphic terminal (see Wilson 1964, 62). Its successor, heavily influenced by strap-ends fashionable on the Carolingian Continent, was of a tongue-shaped form often incorporating integrally cast, relief, or openwork decoration (see, for example, fig. 18A). Examples from southern and eastern England are commonly decorated in the Winchester style which is believed to have originated in the

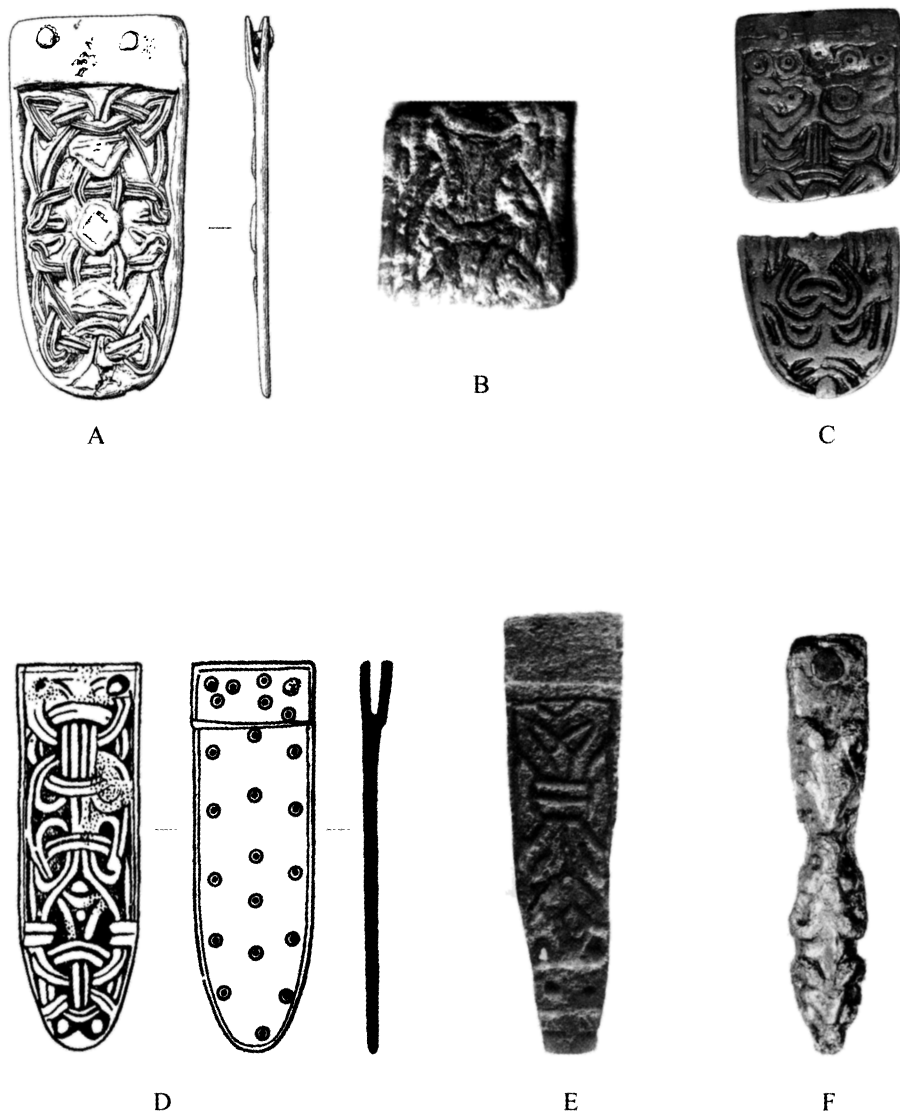


Fig. 18. A selection of Borre-style and multi-headed strap-ends from Britain. *A* Great Walsingham, Norfolk (after Margeson 1996, fig. 7); *B* Hatcliffe, Lincs (in private possession); *C* Essex (in private possession); *D* St Mary Bishopshill Senior, York (after Wilson 1965, fig. 2a); *E* 16-22 Coppergate, York (after Roesdahl 1981, YD 40); *F* Hurly Hawkin, Grampian, Scotland (National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh HHA 30)

cultural and artistic centres of Late Anglo-Saxon Wessex (Wilson 1984, 154–60), however, as discussed below, the Danelaw corpus is associated with a range of other decorative variants.

Grave assemblages from sites such as Birka (Uppland, Sweden) reveal that Carolingian tongue-shaped strap-ends were both circulated and copied in Scandinavia during the ninth and tenth centuries and often worn in tandem with matching buckles and/or baldric mounts (Wamers 1995, taf. 42–7). Other varieties of strap-end are also represented in similar contexts, although in fewer numbers, including a type which carries a zoomorphic terminal and Borre-style ring-knot decoration (Arbman 1940–3, taf. 87, 5 and 10). It should be noted that the animal heads used on Scandinavian strap-ends are of a different character to that belonging to the ninth-century Anglo-Saxon class, a distinction that enables Scandinavian influence to be recognized on strap-ends discovered within the Danelaw (see below).

Analysis of the corpus of ninth- to tenth-century strap-ends from the Danelaw has indicated that this region, particularly the eastern Danelaw, was open to a wide variety of cultural and artistic influences. The eclectic range of strap-ends which circulated in the region include a small number of Scandinavian strap-ends, including a tongue-shaped example from Great Walsingham (Norfolk) (fig. 18A), which is decorated with a standard Borre-style ring-knot design composed of raised lozenges and interlacing strands that can be paralleled widely on Scandinavian metalwork including a very closely related strap-end from Birka (Arbman 1940–3, taf. 87, no. 9) and the zoomorphic strap-ends from two Norwegian Viking Age burials at Borre and Gokstad (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen 1966, pls XXVIIh and XXXb).

More numerous are examples displaying features indicative of an Anglo-Scandinavian source of manufacture. Examples include two fragmentary strap-ends from Hatcliffe (Lincs) (fig. 18B) and Blo Norton (Norfolk) (Margeson 1997, fig. 24), also of the tongue-shaped variety, which are decorated with the so-called ‘vertebral ring-chain’ characterized by a central mid-rib composed of truncated triangles resembling a spine. This motif is particularly common on Viking Age sculpture, especially in north-west England and the Isle of Man, and is interpreted by Richardson (1993, 180) as an essentially Insular rendering of a Scandinavian Borre-style motif.

Another group of tongue-shaped strap-ends which belongs to a similar cultural and artistic context is characterized by decoration combining two Scandinavian Borre-style motifs, the ring-chain and the staring ‘cat-like’ animal mask (fig. 18C). Although individually, both motifs are used extensively on Scandinavian products—the latter is common on convex disc-brooches, for example (Margeson 1997, fig. 22)—their association on the strap-ends represents a distinctive Anglo-Scandinavian artistic innovation. Like the series of disc-brooches displaying a standardized swastika design these strap-ends have a defined East Anglian distribution (fig. 19).

Amongst the substantial corpus of Anglo-Scandinavian material from York are a further two strap-ends which illustrate the influence of the Borre style on contemporary metalworking. The first, from St Mary Bishophill Senior, combines a complex looping ring-knot design on its main panel with a simplified zoomorphic terminal which has

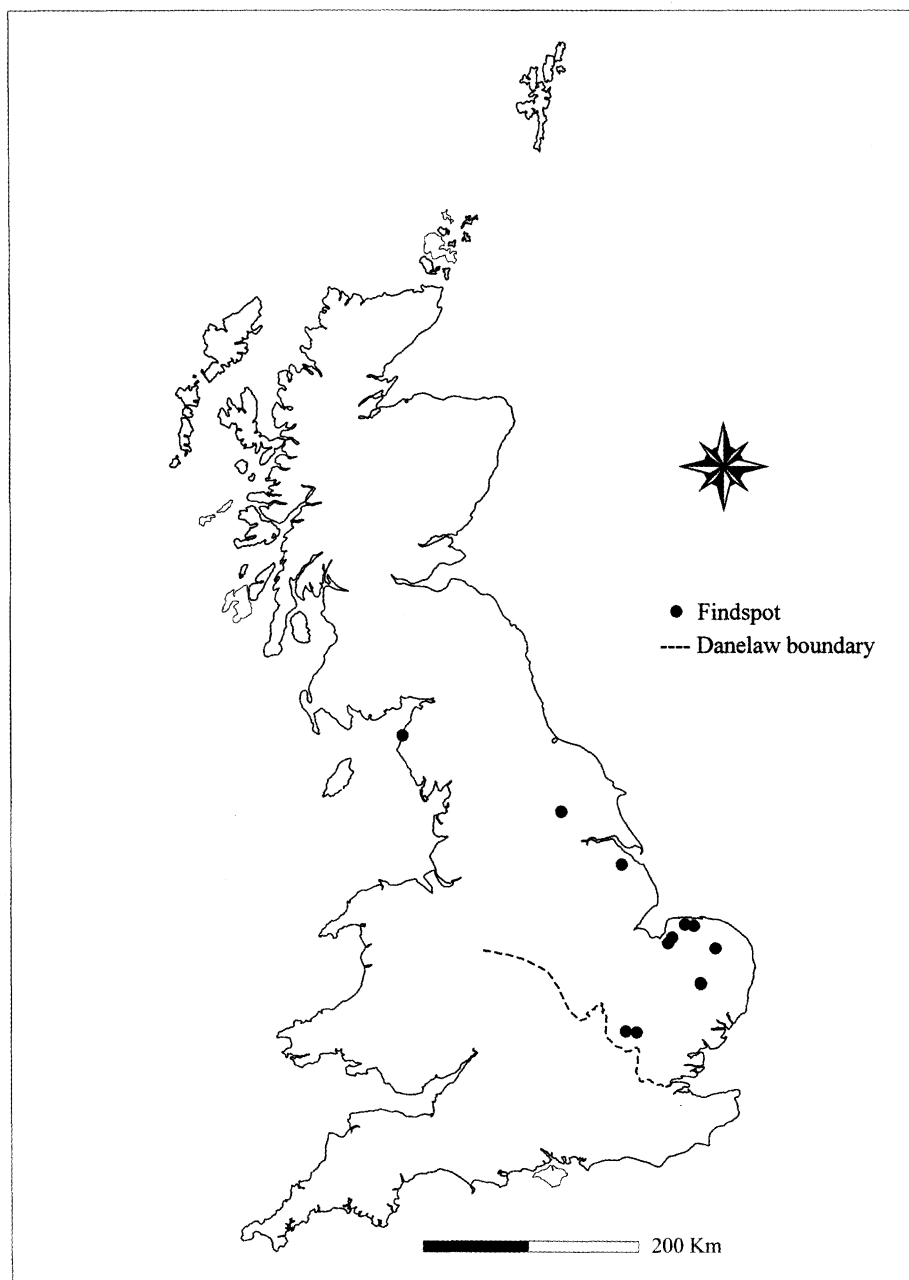


Fig. 19. Distribution of Borre-style strap-ends in Britain

been reduced to a pair of pellet eyes (Wilson 1965) (fig. 18D). While the best parallels for both the form and decoration of this strap-end come from Scandinavian contexts (see, for example, Arbman 1940–3, taf. 87, no. 10), an Anglo-Scandinavian origin is more likely in view of the stamped ring-and-dot design on its underside. The technique is used widely on other metalwork belonging to this tradition, including a series of ribbed strap-ends discussed below. The second example (fig. 18E) was discovered in a tenth-century context during excavations at 16–22 Coppergate (Roesdahl 1981, no. YD40). In this instance, the looping upper section of a Borre-style ring-knot is adapted to represent an Insular triquetra motif which occurs in a similar position on a group of double-sided strap-ends of Irish origin discussed below. In addition to the juxtaposition of these two forms of interlace, another distinctive aspect of the York find is its ‘muzzled’ zoomorphic terminal which is much more closely related to the animal heads used on contemporary Scandinavian metalwork than to those associated with native Anglo-Saxon metalwork traditions.

This ‘Scandinavian’ form of animal head is shared by a further Danelaw group characterized by pairs of confronted animal heads on its shaft (fig. 18F). On several debased examples, which have a defined distribution focussed on York and its hinterland (fig. 20), the facial features of each head are simplified into a series of punched dots and arcs (Rogers 1993, fig. 652, 5320).

In addition to the types discussed so far, which most likely reflect direct contacts with Scandinavia across the North Sea, the Danelaw assemblage is also comprised of strap-ends which reflect cultural links with Hiberno-Norse and Anglo-Scandinavian settlements in Ireland and western Britain. One such group is characterized by double-sided decoration comprising incised roundels, sometimes perforated centrally through the thickness of the metal, and panels of interlace enclosed within obliquely hatched or beaded borders (fig. 21A). The predominant terminal form, incorporating triangular or rounded eyes sometimes in conjunction with incised ‘whiskers’ (see, for example, Hart 1989, fig. 1), is also very different in character to those employed on other classes discussed thus far.

Stylistic traits, including the use of Insular-derived interlace motifs, combined with the discovery of examples from the interior of Ireland, provide strong grounds for attributing the origins of the class to a ninth-century Irish milieu (Richardson 1993, 152–7). Their wider circulation within the Irish Sea region suggests that the class was subsequently adopted by Scandinavian settlers, a cultural association attested by a number of archaeological discoveries. An example from Cronk Moar, Jurby, on the Isle of Man, for example, was discovered embedded in the remains of some textiles from a Viking burial mound (Bersu and Wilson 1966, 68, pl. XVI, b), whereas that from the excavated multi-period settlement at the Udal, North Uist, came from one of the Viking Age levels (Graham-Campbell 1973). Viking Dublin, meanwhile, is a likely candidate for a production centre, given the several examples from tenth-century habitation contexts encountered during various excavations within the town (Lang 1988, fig. 118). Visual testimony to this Viking influence is also supplied by examples which share an Insular version of a Borre-style ring-chain motif closely paralleled on a number of

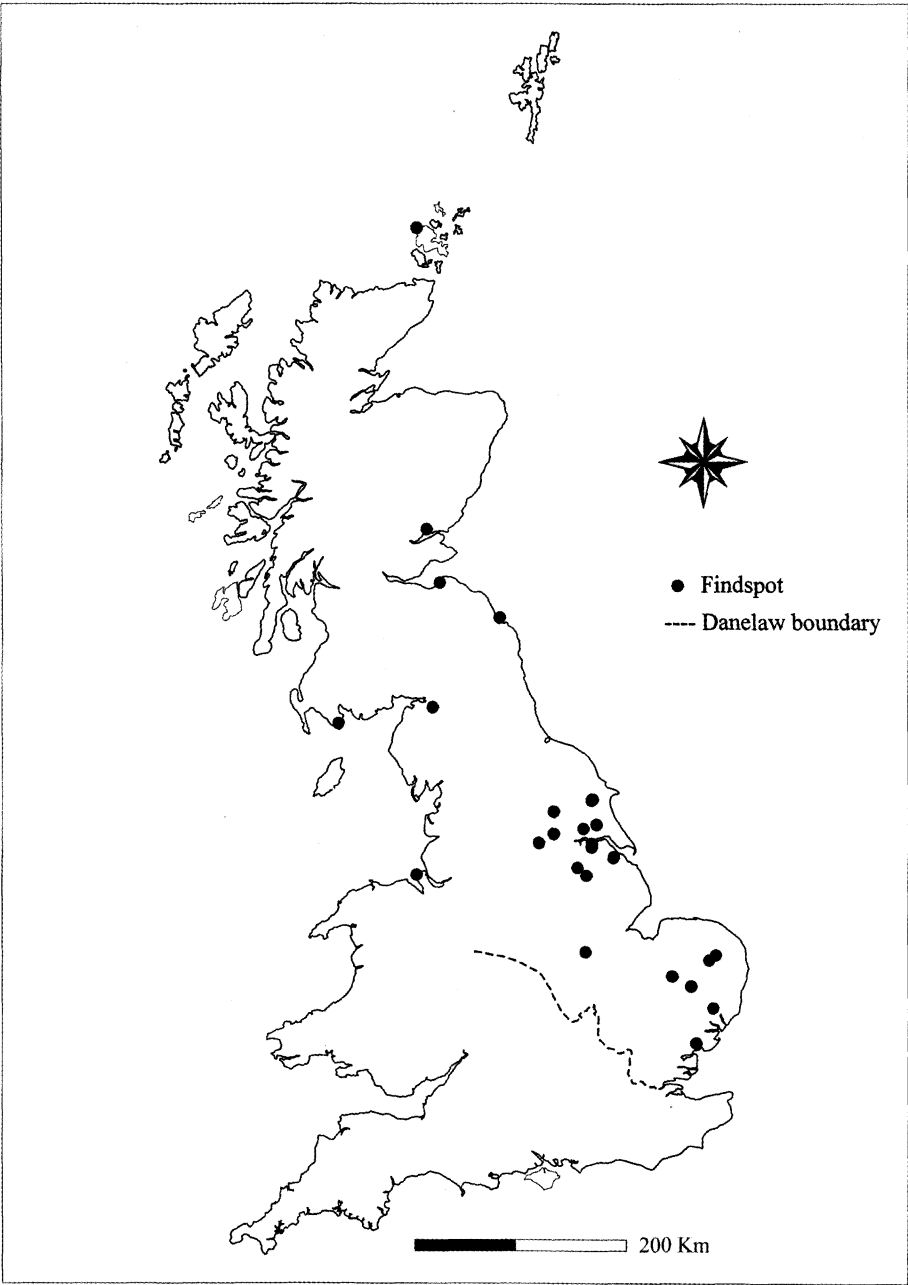


Fig. 20. Distribution of multi-headed strap-ends in Britain

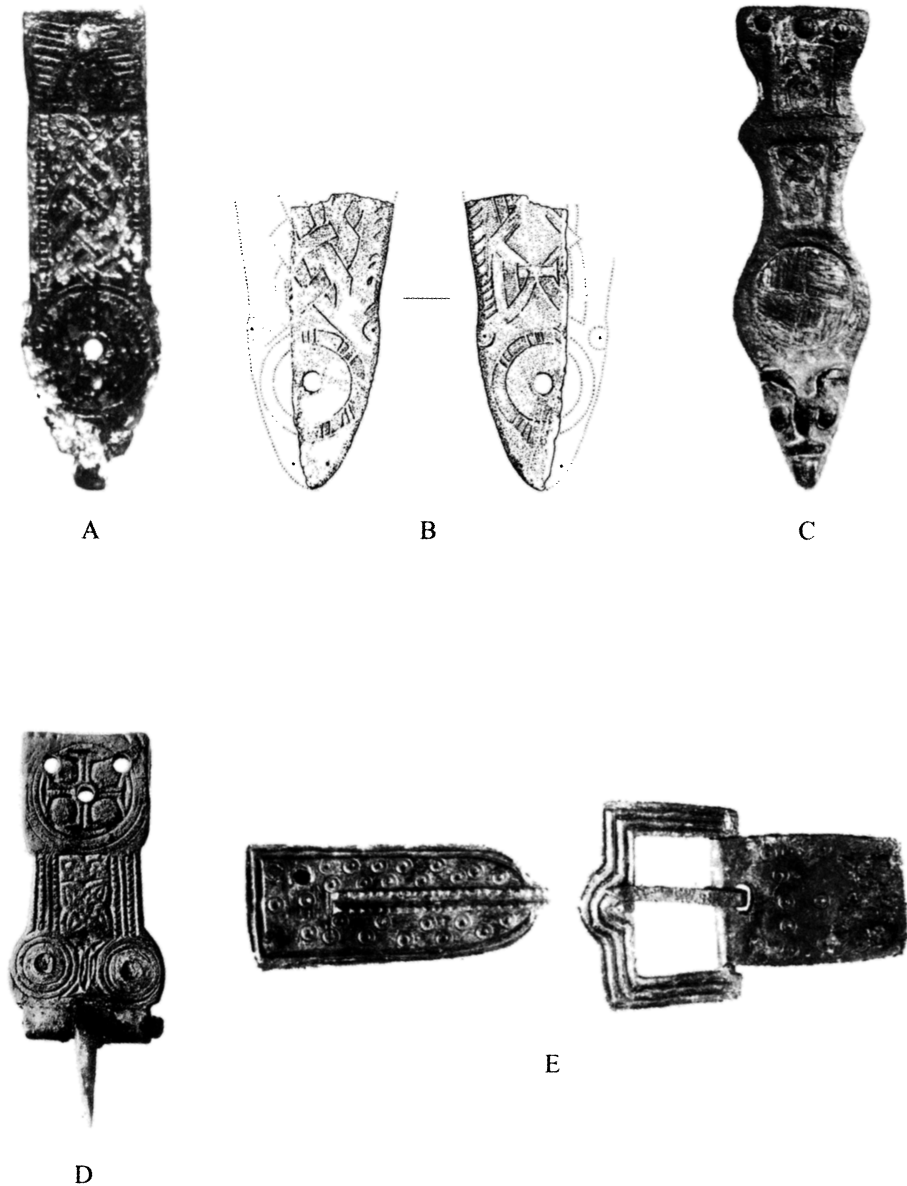


Fig. 21. A selection of double-sided and ribbed strap-ends with examples of related buckles. *A* Ashby-de-la-launde, Lincolnshire (Scunthorpe Museum 1991. 458.2); *B* The Udal, North Uist (after Graham-Campbell 1973); *C* Polstead, Suffolk (Ipswich Museum 1992.11.4); *D* Eynsham Abbey, Oxfordshire (sf 1516, ©Oxford Archaeological Unit); *E* Carlisle Cathedral (Ae 183 (strap-end) and 269 (buckle), ©Carlisle Archaeological Unit)

Scandinavian finds including that on the strap-end from Borre (Vestfold, Norway) (fig. 21B).

In their use of perforations, incised roundels, and panels of interlace, the strap-ends are closely related to other metalwork from the Irish Sea region. This material includes a group of bridle-mounts from Viking warrior-graves, such as those from Kiloran Bay, Colonsay (Bersu and Wilson 1966, pl. 7, a), and a series of buckles, one of which was recently discovered during excavations at Whithorn (Dumfries and Galloway) (Nicholson and Hill 1997, fig. 10.57, BZ 18).

As alluded to above, versions of this class have also been discovered within England, their findspots clustering within a region corresponding to the Eastern Danelaw (fig. 22). A small number, including an example from Ashby-de-la-launde (Lincs) (fig. 21A), are sufficiently akin in form and style to examples from Ireland and the Irish Sea area to attribute their manufacture to these regions. These 'English' discoveries should be compared with a variety of other contemporary metalwork of Insular origin discovered in this region, most pertinent to the current discussion being that of a buckle closely related to the series of Insular strap-ends from excavations at Eynsham Abbey (Oxon) (fig. 21D).

On the basis of their deviant characteristics, however, most of the English examples are more likely to represent contemporary copies made within the Danelaw rather than being imports from the west. The most obvious difference displayed by the English variant is the lack of the central perforation, though the vestiges of the roundel survive as a circular field of decoration in the usual location above the terminal (fig. 21C).

A further group of strap-ends discovered in the Danelaw which is indicative of such links represent a variant on the tongue-shaped form having a raised central longitudinal rib flanked on either side by punched ring-and-dots (fig. 21E). Examples have been found in association with matching buckles, within a number of Viking graves from the Irish Sea region, including Peel Castle on the Isle of Man and Cathedral Green, Carlisle (Graham-Campbell forthcoming; Keevil 1989, fig. 2, no. 3). Stray metal-detector finds in eastern England, usually of a debased quality, reveal that such strap-ends were also copied within the Danelaw (fig. 23).

The origins of this class are somewhat enigmatic; outside Britain two examples have been found in Scandinavia (Graham-Campbell et al., forthcoming) and a third is known from the site of Domburg (Holland) (Capelle 1976, taf. 18, no. 307). The use of matching buckle-sets, however, is in itself a likely indicator of external foreign influence considering the general scarcity of buckles from contemporary Anglo-Saxon contexts. This is in contrast to the wider evidence provided by Viking graves from Scandinavia and Britain which reveal that this fashion was widespread in both Carolingian territories and the Viking homelands during the ninth and tenth centuries (see, for example, Arbman 1940–43, taf. 87).

The complimentary distributions associated with these two varieties of strap-end, together with those of other Insular objects, such as a series of miniature hand-bells (see Richards, this volume), provide additional evidence for the cultural links that existed between the various Scandinavian communities inhabiting these shores during the tenth

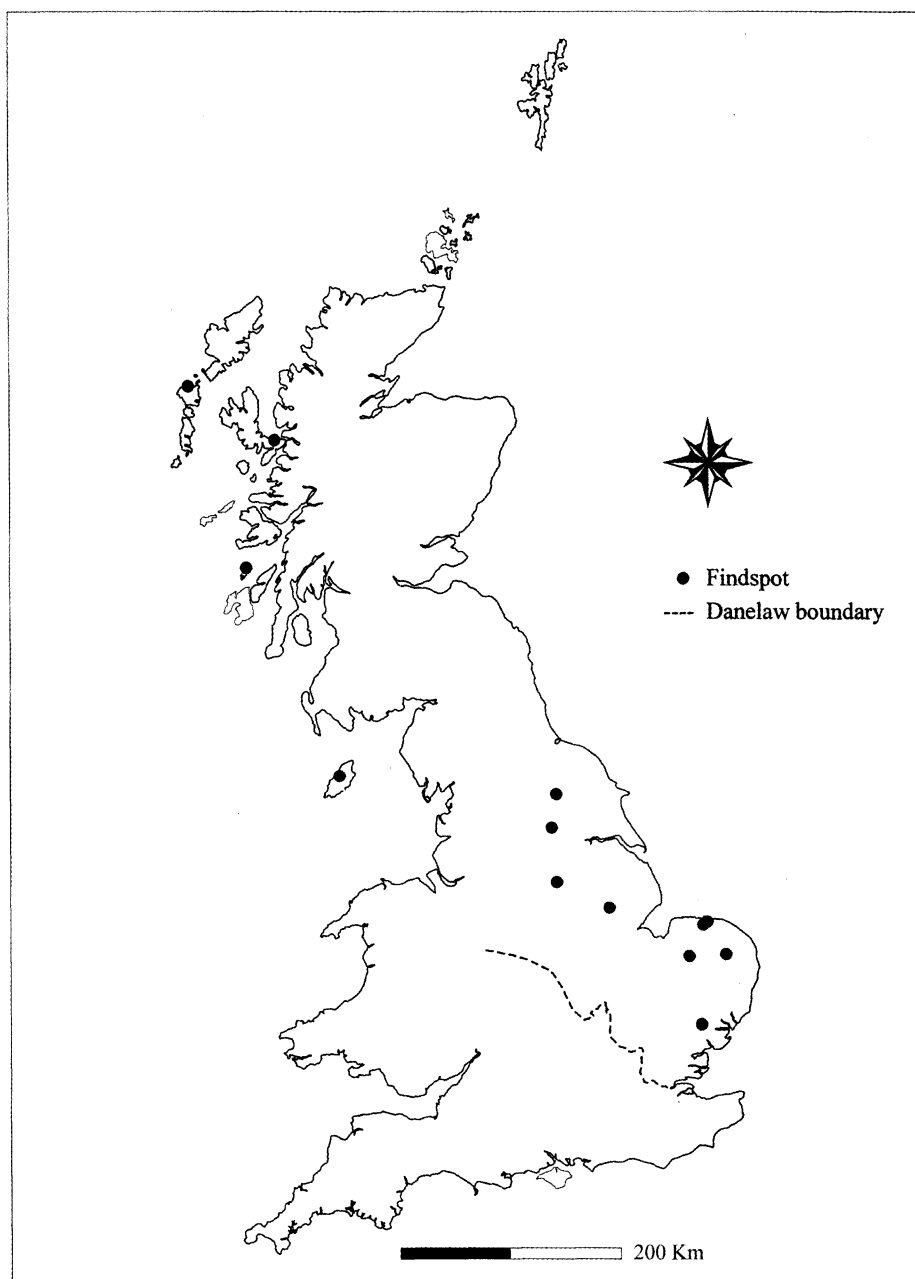


Fig. 22. Distribution of double-sided strap-ends in Britain

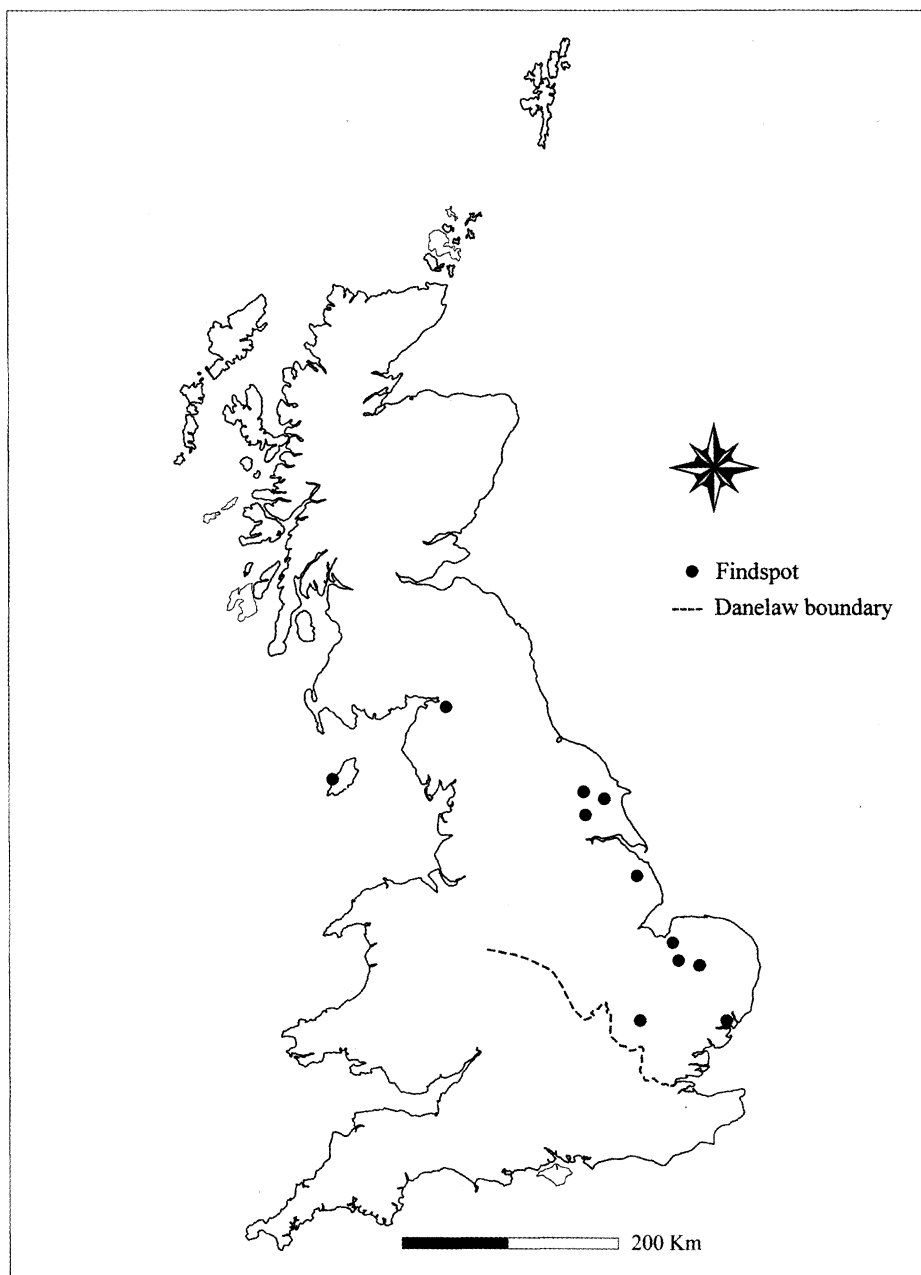


Fig. 23. Distribution of ribbed strap-ends in Britain

century. While highlighting the considerable distances such portable artefacts could travel, either as items of costume, trade, and/or exchange, such patterns also reflect the influence of Scandinavian settlement on the transfer and assimilation of artistic motifs from mixed cultural traditions.

Conclusions

This discussion brings into focus a number of themes which have relevance to an understanding of the wider social issues underpinning Scandinavian settlement in the Danelaw. Firstly, the picture to emerge from the evidence reviewed is one of cultural integration, at least in terms of jewellery, and by implication costume, over a relatively short period, a conclusion supported by the relative paucity of diagnostically 'Scandinavian' finds in relation to metalwork produced within a mixed Anglo-Scandinavian cultural milieu (for discussion of similar issues, see Richards, this volume).

Secondly, reflecting upon the specific range of dress-accessories involved in the development of this new hybrid cultural tradition, one might ask why is it that strap-ends and one predominant form of brooch-type were central to the process of stylistic transfer and innovation characteristic of Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork? One possible explanation is that amongst the communities at the interface between such cultural exchanges, both strap-ends and disc-brooches would have been one of the most immediately recognisable and familiar elements of their respective dress traditions. Conversely, the evidence suggests that dress-accessories—such as the paired oval brooches deposited in Viking graves—which represented a uniquely Scandinavian fashion in terms of their form and the way in which they were worn, were abandoned relatively early on by Scandinavian colonists. As a result, the latter appear to have played a comparatively minor role in the process of stylistic assimilation.

From a theoretical perspective, following on from the concept that material culture can be implicated in the expression and negotiation of cultural and ethnic identity through the process of social comparison (Shennan 1989, 17–22; Weissner 1989; Jones 1997, 106–19), the above may represent a case of the selective use of material culture to facilitate the process of cultural integration. In the context of Scandinavian settlement, it is possible that those aspects of costume and dress which represented a 'foreign' unfamiliar identity may have been actively abandoned in favour of other aspects of material culture which could be used to express unity and cultural likeness.¹

¹ I would like to thank both James Graham-Campbell and Caroline Richardson for sharing their expertise in Viking Age and Anglo-Scandinavian ornamental metalwork with me. I am also most grateful to the following for allowing me to record finds held in museums and archaeological units: Tom Plunkett, Ipswich Museum; Kevin Leahy, Scunthorpe Museum; Trevor Cowie and Ian Scott, National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh; Anne Dodd, Oxford Archaeological Unit; and finally Mike McCarthy, Carlisle Archaeological Unit.

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Part 5. Settlement Archaeology and the Scandinavian Settlement

The Viking Presence in England? The Burial Evidence Reconsidered

GUY HALSALL

‘the inferences from the evidence have sometimes been most dubious’
(Morris 1981a, 234)

Perhaps the oldest of all uses (or abuses) of the archaeological evidence for the disposal of the early medieval dead has been to map the movement of peoples. Post-Roman cemeteries have long played a central role in the debates surrounding the migration of Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Lombards, and Visigoths. This body of excavated material is substantial, but has, nonetheless, generally been found wanting in answering questions about the settlement of ‘Germanic’ barbarians within the former Roman Empire. The evidence cited of Viking burial in England is, by comparison, minuscule: a handful of graves spread across England north of the Thames (for key studies see Graham-Campbell 1980; Shetelig 1954; Wilson 1968; 1976; Shetelig 1940 is a still useful basic catalogue) (fig. 24). The paucity of this evidence has meant that it has occupied a far less prominent position in discussions of Scandinavian settlement in England than, for example, that occupied by the study of place- or field-names, estate structures, and so on.

This, however, has not prevented attempts to identify the subjects of graves or grave-groups as Scandinavian settlers, or prevented conclusions from being drawn from this material about the nature of Scandinavian settlement. In this chapter I should like to reconsider, in necessarily preliminary and provisional form, the evidence adduced of Viking burial in England, from the perspective of someone more used to asking analogous questions of the funerary data of the period 350–700, in the hope that this will provide a fresh perspective on some old problems. The chapter’s scope will be the evidence of the burials themselves; above-ground monuments are considered elsewhere in this volume (in the chapters by Stocker and Sidebottom), as is the skeletal evidence (Evison).

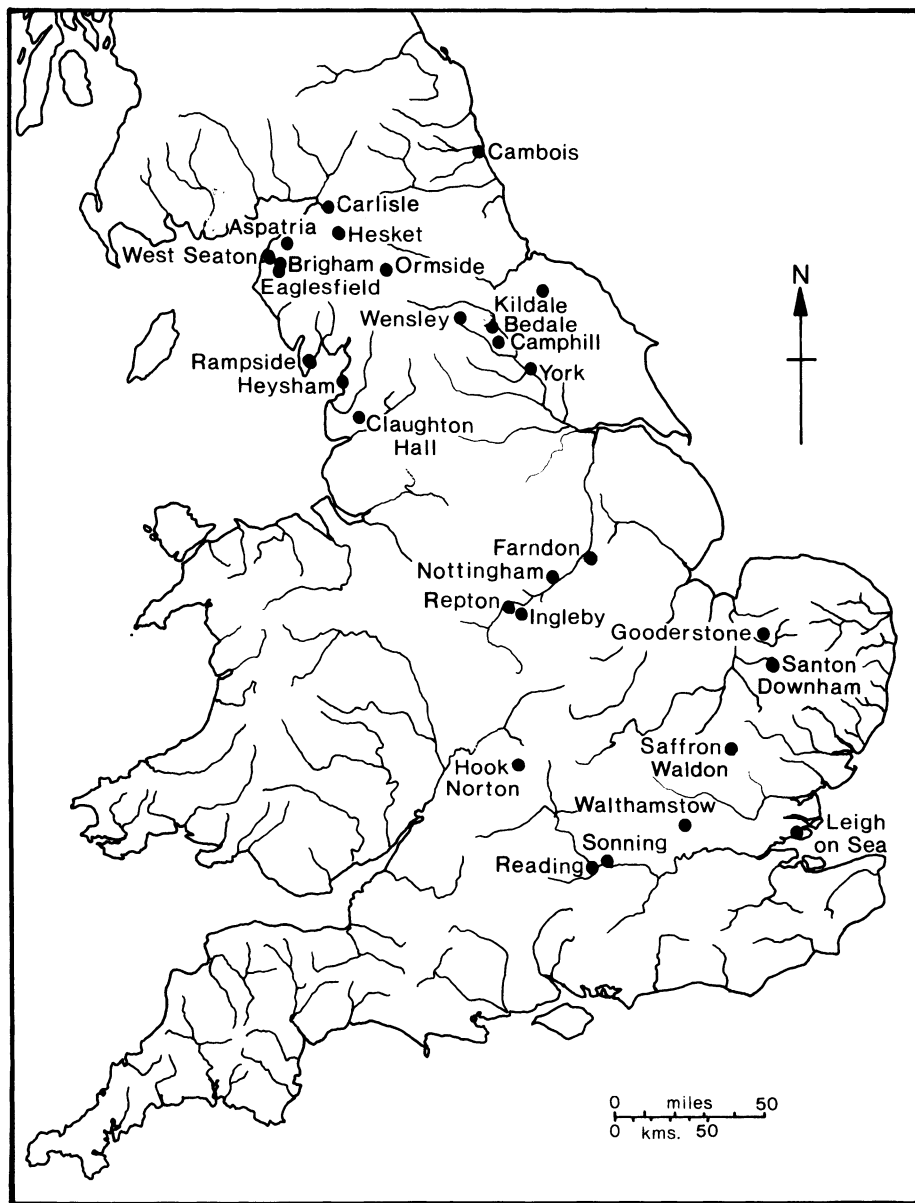


Fig. 24. The traditional map of 'Viking' burials (after Wilson 1976a, 394)

Variability in Mortuary Practice and its Explanation

Burial practice in the first millennium was diverse and dynamic; this point is absolutely fundamental to any understanding of allegedly 'Viking' burials in England. In lowland Britain between AD 1–750, for example, we see the introduction of a Roman cremation custom around the beginning of the millennium; the re-introduction of inhumation in the late Roman period, first with grave-goods, then with such offerings declining in number; then the reintroduction of furnished inhumation with grave-goods of a different type around 400; the introduction of a northern German cremation ritual at about the same time. Further significant transformations in burial customs occurred around 600, with changes in the patterns of grave-goods deposition; the appearance of lavish burial under barrows, and the gradual disappearance of cremation; the slow demise of grave-goods by the eighth century; the abandonment of old cemeteries and the foundation of new sites around Christian cult-centres. Thus in the first seven and a half centuries of the Christian era there were at least ten changes in methods of placing the dead. To this we should add regional variation and diversity of custom, the use of mausolea or funerary churches, and so on. If we took a pan-European (or even pan-British) perspective on the same period, this kaleidoscope of funerary practice would be enhanced still further (Halsall 1995a, 5–30 for a summary). It is difficult to understand how Catherine Hills (1999, 22) can recently refer to mortuary practice as an 'innately conservative element of social practice', although her view does not seem untypical. Presumably it derives, partly, from the unchanging nature of the archaeologically visible remains of European graves from the adoption of churchyard burial until about 1900. Yet above ground, and in terms of ritual and ceremony, it is clear that burial has continued to be a dynamic field of social expression.

This backdrop of mortuary variability ought immediately to demonstrate the problems with arguments which attribute any divergence from generally assumed 'norms' to immigrant 'peoples'. Variation and change in mortuary behaviour is too great to be explained simply by the movement of people and/or religious change. Before we can understand the meaning of such burials we must ask whether the archaeological evidence necessarily demonstrates the intrusion of Scandinavian rites and material culture at all. Are the differences between 'Scandinavian' and other later Anglo-Saxon burials any greater than many of the other changes within lowland British burial practice? If the answer to either question is negative, are we really letting the archaeological data speak for themselves, or rather hanging on them a convenient, if rather crude, binary polarity based upon *a priori* notions drawn from (equally unrefined) study of the documentary record?

Further, where the archaeological data *do* suggest intrusive Scandinavian elements, is this diversity purely to be explained as a passive reflection of historically attested migration? More rigorous confrontation with these questions should allow the archaeological evidence of burial in ninth- and tenth-century northern England to ask and answer more, and more interesting, questions than simply whether Scandinavian settlers lived in villages with English place-names and why the locals tolerated 'pagan' burials in their churchyards.

Telling the Difference: 1. Rite

Archaeologically, an intrusive community's burials should be best revealed by their rite. Whilst acknowledging their potential dynamism and diversity, such rites are nevertheless bound up with *mentalité*—with ideas of broadly defined cosmology (Tambiah 1985). They ought, therefore, to be more revealing of the movement of people than the simple distribution of artefact-types. Nonetheless, to be convincing, against the backdrop of change and variation mentioned above, rigorous criteria must be applied. There should be a direct link between the 'intrusive' rite and that of the supposed migrants' homeland; the use of this rite in the 'homelands' should occur earlier than, and then overlap chronologically with, its appearance in the 'host' country; finally the 'intrusive' rite should differ significantly from that of the 'host country' (Halsall 1992, 198).

The application of this test to Viking Age England is muddled by the diversity of Scandinavian burial (for introductory accounts in English, see Brøndsted 1960, 269–83; Foote and Wilson 1970, 406–14; Jones 1984, 425–30; Roesdahl 1982, 164–71; 1987, 156–8; 1993; Shetelig and Falk 1937, 277–85). Cremation and inhumation were both employed, as well as chamber-, mound-, and ship-burials. The provision of grave-goods varied from one region and period to another. Against this background, links between individual burials in England and the Scandinavian origins of their subjects become correspondingly less simple. Without additional indicators, just about every known western European rite from the first millennium AD could have a Scandinavian near analogy.

However, we must still consider the English background; by the end of the eighth century this was rather less diverse. Cremation had ceased to be employed, and grave-goods had also declined, becoming extremely rare in the early eighth century, from which time most native English burials were unfurnished inhumations, often although not exclusively, in churchyards (Geake 1997; Adams 1996 is an exemplary report on the excavation of such a 'grave-good-less' site). This presents, at first sight, a promisingly uniform background against which intrusive rites ought to show up clearly.

Given the Church's condemnation of cremation (admittedly rarer than often supposed (Effros 1997, 270)), and given that this method of disposal of the corpse differs dramatically from the inhumation rite current in the ninth century, and thus may speak of different mentalities from those common in England, the sudden appearance of this rite may well mark the arrival of new people. However, it is very rare in Viking Age England. The Hesketh-in-the-Forest (Cumbria) burial (Cowen 1934, 174–80; 1948a, 73–4; 1967a, 31–3; Hall 1995, 51–2; Richards 1991, 113) has been the subject of some debate; Håkon Shetelig (1940, 20–1; 1954, 88–90) argues that it was a cremation with Norwegian analogues, and others (Cowen 1967a, 32) dispute this (although conceding that the rite may have included the cremation of animals). The burial was accompanied by extensive Viking Age grave-goods, and apparently covered by a carefully constructed mound. Whether or not the subject had been cremated, this was nevertheless an unusual and distinctive early tenth-century burial. It has been suggested that the Cloughton Hall (Lancs) burial (Richards 1991, 113) may have been an urned cremation (Edwards 1970;

accepted by Julian Richards, Marcus Jecock, Lizzie Richmond, and Catherine Tuck 1995), but the context, in spite of strenuous efforts to unravel it, seems hopelessly disturbed.

More promising is the enigmatic cemetery of Heath Wood, Ingleby (Derbs) (Clarke and Fraser 1946; Clarke, Fraser, and Munslow 1948; Hall 1995, 51; Posnansky 1956; Richards 1991, 114; Richards, Jecock, Richmond and Tuck 1995; Shetelig 1954, 77–9, 91). Convincing parallels for the rite used here, sparsely furnished, un-urned cremation under mounds, have been adduced from early medieval northern Jutland. The few diagnostic objects recovered seem to point to a Viking Age date even if they may not all be of Scandinavian origin. This represents the clearest evidence in England of what might be called an intrusive Scandinavian cemetery.

Plausibly Scandinavian cremation, then, is attested at only one site. Other rites are even less promising. The use of burial mounds may not entirely have died out in later Anglo-Saxon England. The possibly mid- to late Saxon cemetery at Winwick (Cheshire) (Freke and Thacker 1990) used a Bronze Age barrow as its focus. There is no conclusive evidence for boat burial in England (excluding, of course, the Isle of Man); Richards, Jecock, Richmond, and Tuck (1995) suggest the use of wood from ships at Heath Wood, Ingleby, and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle (1995) proposes something similar at York, but the evidence is hardly decisive in any instance (see also Richards 1991, 115). That apart, we have the enigmatic mass burial at Repton (Derbs) (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992; Biddle, Kjølbye-Biddle, Northover, and Pagan 1986), interpreted as a burial mound erected over a prestigious founder-burial and filled, as a tribute, with the bodies of members of the Great Army who died in 873–874. This seems unlikely. The evidence for the founder-grave is extremely flimsy: an account by an elderly local, forty years after the event, the opening of the mound in the 1680s. Biddle, Kjølbye-Biddle, Northover, and Pagan (1986, 114) claim that Walker, the local, ‘seems to have had [...] a good memory’, yet this good memory does not appear to have run to remembering which side of the church the mound was on (he said the north; it is to the west), and no other element of his story was confirmed by excavation. It defies belief that the Great Army’s leaders should have excarnated (by boiling perhaps—decomposition would have taken too long in winter) 249 bodies which happened to be lying around (after no recorded battle; 249 dead would imply a total ‘butcher’s bill’ of over 10% of the Great Army, even if numbered in thousands) and then neatly stacked their bones by type around a central burial, in a ritual unknown in Denmark. The Repton evidence points more simply to a sort of charnel house (or mound) containing the carefully reburied remains of a previous (largely monastic?) cemetery, in which some of the burials, to judge from unstratified metalwork, may have dated to the 870s (see also Hadley 2000a, 220–24). Indeed the radio-carbon dates produced from the site are varied, suggesting that the mound contains individuals who died at various periods between the eighth and tenth centuries (see Evison, this volume). The furnished inhumations in and around the church at Repton are more promising candidates for Scandinavian burials.

Grave-goods in later first-millennium English burials have been enough for most researchers to label the occupant of a grave ‘Viking’ (e.g. Biddle, Kjølbye-Biddle,

Northover, and Pagan 1986, 114). When discussing an east-west oriented inhumation in Wensley churchyard (Yorks) that was accompanied by grave-goods, Morris identified (1981b, 77) the only diagnostic item, an Anglo-Saxon sword, but insisted that 'the burial from which it comes is clearly Viking'. How, clearly? Everything about the burial—its location, its basic rite, and the material provided—is Anglo-Saxon. Only the provision of grave-goods makes it unusual, and, had we no documentary historical framework into which to shoe-horn this data, it is unlikely that any archaeologist would see it as the burial of a Scandinavian immigrant; there is no *prima facie* archaeological support for this interpretation. Are grave-goods enough to identify a grave as 'Viking'?

We should, firstly, not assume that there was complete uniformity in English burial practice. Churchyard burial was by no means the exclusive location for burial in this period. A number of sites have been found located away from churches (e.g. Addingham (Yorks) (Adams 1996); Winwick (Freke and Thacker 1990)); recent work has revealed a number of 'Late Saxon' isolated burials associated with execution sites (A. Reynolds pers. comm.), and we should not rule out the idea that people might occasionally even try to found new cemeteries (on the diverse location of burial in middle and later Anglo-Saxon England, see Blair 1994, 69–73; Hadley 2000b). Grave-goods, though extremely rare, were not completely abandoned after c. 720, and we are hampered in a full understanding of this by the tendency of English archaeology to draw a line around 850, after which a new grave-goods horizon dependent upon 'the Vikings' is held to begin (see, e.g. Geake 1997, esp. 125); the issue is thereby entirely prejudged. Chronology presents further problems. The material which continues into Geake's 'Period 3' (post-720; for a list of such items see Geake 1997, 139, table 6.1) is usually fairly generic, rarely decorated, and thus equally rarely susceptible of fine dating. This means that the 'final abandonment' of grave-goods may very well have been rather less dramatic than Geake (1997; 1999) supposes. To take one example, the burial accompanied by an undiagnostic knife found at Little Paxton (Cambs) (Addyman 1969, 64) could easily date to any period from the seventh century to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. More pertinently, the difficulty of dating such burials might well affect an unknown (and unknowable) number of 'early Saxon' dates automatically assigned to sparsely furnished burials of which only old antiquarian descriptions survive, the finds having been lost.

Nevertheless, we can list some finds: pins and middle Saxon pottery found in the cemetery at West Hall Farm, Sedgeford (Norfolk) (Wilson and Hurst 1959, 298); the burial at Ormside (Cumbria) of an eighth-century bowl that is Celtic but 'can only be explained as Viking loot, and from a Viking burial', although why this should be is left unexplained (Cowen 1948a, 75); Harrold (Beds) grave 3, which is possibly ninth century (Eagles and Evison 1970; Geake 1997, 125); four burials from Ripon Ladykirk/St Marygate (Yorks) containing late Saxon bone combs (Hall and Whyman 1996); graves with developed Stamford Ware, a spear, and a coin of Ecgbert of Wessex of 830–835 from Caister-by-Yarmouth (Norfolk) (Richards 1991, 115); the burial with a seax and a knife from Wicken Fen (Cambs) (Richards 1991, 116; Evison 1969, 341); the ninth/tenth-century grave containing a Trewhiddle-style buckle and a penannular

brooch from Royston Heath (Cambs) (Evison 1969, 341); and the burials at Saffron Walden (Essex) (Evison 1969, 336–41) that may have been accompanied by other generally late Saxon grave-goods in addition to the Scandinavian material to which we shall return. The list could, doubtless, be extended. Furthermore, centuries of burial in churchyards have certainly resulted in the removal and destruction of whatever scarce burial goods there may once have been. In this regard it is noteworthy that churchyards contain many Anglo-Saxon scads (Morris 1983, 60–1, notes to table V) and other late Anglo-Saxon stray finds ‘with considerable frequency’. Again, this blurs any supposed distinctions, chronological or cultural.

The grave-goods in the above catalogue are by no means exclusively items of costume: brooches, dress-pins, or buckles, for example. Were this the case the list’s significance would be reduced; it could simply be claimed that a body was occasionally buried dressed, or in a shroud fastened with pins. The list includes not only knives, which argues at least for a slightly more formal or elaborate—certainly deliberate—clothing of the dead for burial, but also objects placed in the grave separately: iron bucket, hone, and spear (at Harrold); pottery, combs, coins, and vessels. All this means that the custom was not entirely extinct of depositing objects with the dead in public ritual. Such deposition must have had some significance, and the objects so buried must have had some symbolic value.

A second provisional point may add significantly to the first. The examples above are located entirely north of the Thames, especially in areas which were to fall under Scandinavian rule, notably East Anglia. This point is provisional for I make no claims to have tried to produce an exhaustive catalogue; more detailed work might thus refute the argument. If the distribution is in any way real, it might well show that a custom of—admittedly rare—burial with grave-goods survived in the areas where we are accustomed to look for Viking burial, and where we are used to having Viking burials identified solely by their grave-goods. In this connection it is important to note that there seems to have been a fairly unbroken tradition of accompanied mound burial in Cumbria throughout the pre-Conquest era (O’Sullivan 1996). This adds importantly to the ‘background noise’ of pre- or non-Scandinavian burial in the areas of the Danelaw, and reduces the plausibility of identifying the subjects of burials as Vikings just because of the use of grave-goods. Furnished burial might be read, rather than simply as a passive reflection of Scandinavian origins, as an elaboration on a ritual theme played pianissimo for the previous 150–200 years (Halsall 1998a, 335–36 for analogy); however, even on the most extreme, ‘Scandinavianist’ estimation this theme could hardly be claimed to have been played to a deafening crescendo *during* the Viking period in northern England.

Furnished burial has been assumed to have been Viking mainly because of the supposed paganism of the rite. This idea refuses to die in British archaeology, despite there being no necessary correlation between grave-goods and a particular religion or view of the afterlife (Ucko 1969), and in spite of the fact that it has been known, since the appearance of Bailey Young’s (1975) excellent doctoral thesis a quarter of a century ago, that there is no empirical basis whatsoever, documentary or archaeological, for an opposition between Christianity and burial with grave-goods (James 1989, 25–26).

James Graham-Campbell and Colleen Batey (1998, 143–54), nevertheless, talk recently (albeit slightly more cautiously than previous writers) of Viking grave-goods in Scotland as indicative of views of the afterlife. Geake (1997; 1999) clings to conversion as partial explanation for the ‘abandonment’ of grave-goods in England, largely on the basis of an opposition between grave-goods and churchyard burial. As implied above, this opposition ought to be nuanced, and explanation is probably better sought in the simple fact that the foundation of churches and churchyard cemeteries took place in England after the deposition of grave-goods had ceased to be common.

The decline of the practice in mainland Europe took place at much the same time, and there conversion cannot provide an explanation. We may assume a religious justification of some sort, but we shall never know what was said over a grave as goods were placed in it, and however the practice was explained at the time, it was not the preserve of any particular creed, and no creed articulated any opposition to the general custom. To drive the argument home, we need look no further than graves with the public deposition of chalices, objects of clear symbolic and religious significance (Wilson and Blunt 1961, 88–90; Wilson 1964, 54). That grave-goods were still used in pagan Scandinavia at this time does not of itself prove the ritual’s paganism. As noted, burial customs varied considerably in the Viking homelands, not least in the provision of grave-goods. This alone ought to demonstrate that the burial of such artefacts must relate to something more than a simple reflection of ‘paganism’. Recent work on Scandinavian archaeology has begun to accept this point (Gräslund 1991, 46).

It has also been argued that the Church promoted an ideology of equality, which shunned demonstrations of worldly status, such as through grave-goods; this would then be a further reason to perceive furnished burials as pagan and Viking (Tarlow 1997, 139). The argument is often cited as an example of the deliberate use of ritual to conceal social distinctions (e.g. Carver 1999, 8), and is one of the more pernicious myths to have taken root in British funerary archaeology. It seems to stem from a rather ill-thought through comment by Ian Hodder (1980, 168), in support of the notion that rituals may serve to disguise ‘social reality’ (although that rather begs the question of what ‘reality’ is): ‘And surely Church of England burial in our modern society should convince us of this. In many of our deaths we express an ideal of equality, humility and non-materialism which is blatantly in contrast with the way we live our lives in practice’. Such is Hodder’s influence within British archaeology that in this regard he seems subsequently to have been elevated from influential theoretician to the status of Father of the Church. Let us set aside the fact that the analogy does not appear to work (think of the funeral of Princess Diana, for instance, or the clear differences in the resources spent by families on funeral ceremony, or the differences in above-ground memorials). The Church has never promoted an ‘obfuscating’ ideology of equality of death, in patristic writing or ecclesiastical legislation. Inequality amongst the community of the dead is expressed through many features, not least spatial organisation (e.g. Effros 1996) and post-mortem ritual, even if rarely through the provision of grave-goods (although the deposition of chalices and other objects in later medieval priest graves surely expresses some inequality). The inequalities expressed are not all related

to a single dimension of social structure based upon wealth or class. We may thus dismiss this supposed Christian 'ideological' opposition to grave-goods.

Although grave-goods were not common in middle to later Anglo-Saxon England, the English were not averse to depositing artefacts in other ritual forms with some frequency; certainly there seems to have been no contradiction between these rituals and Christianity. The first such form is the hoard. Early medieval hoarding is still usually interpreted as the burial, for safety, of treasures which were never later recovered. It would be unnecessarily perverse to dispose of this explanation entirely but it is not universally persuasive. Hoards are not uncommon throughout England, and, although some (such as Croydon (Surrey) (Brooks and Graham-Campbell 1986)) are apparently of Scandinavian composition, many others are clearly of straightforwardly English origin. We should seek a similar range of explanations both for Scandinavian and non-Scandinavian hoards in England (and elsewhere). Did all of their owners die before they could retrieve them, and without telling anyone else? Were they all so forgetful that they simply could not remember where they buried their treasures? If so, how many hundreds more retrieved hoards (and how much more wealth) must there have been? Moreover, the frequently lavish composition of the 'unretrieved' hoards ought to suggest that the wealthier members of Anglo-Saxon society were particularly forgetful (which would have some implications for the nature of the pre-Conquest aristocracy). The functional 'chance loss' explanation seems, however, particularly implausible in individual instances. The Lilla Howe (Yorks) hoard of gold and silver was buried in a mound (Watkin and Mann 1981). Whilst not wishing to deny the alterity of early medieval mentalities, it would seem rather less than sensible to bury treasures for safe-keeping in the top of a large, visible, man-made landscape feature, of a type known to early medieval people often to contain burials and 'treasure'. The Goldsborough (Yorks) hoard (admittedly of partly Scandinavian composition) was buried in a church—not the most obvious place to hide wealth from marauders. It seems that we ought to accept the strong possibility of a ritual motive for at least some Viking Age English hoarding, even if it is impossible to know what that motive was.

The second ritual form of deposition is in rivers (as suggested by Wilson 1965, 51). This will doubtless still raise eye-brows, as it is difficult to understand the purpose of such deposition or how it could be squared with Christianity. Nevertheless, the fact of the matter remains that river finds are common, and 'functional' explanations—chance loss or loss in action—are even less convincing than with the hoard-finds. Large numbers of later Anglo-Saxon weapons and other metalwork are known from rivers. The *Victoria County History* for Cambridgeshire (Salzman 1938, 322–8) alone lists finds of three axes, seventeen spears, two swords, and three seaxes from fen or river contexts. Cambridgeshire was not the scene of untypically intense fighting (indeed it seems largely to have been bypassed in Edward the Elder's conquest: Hines 1999, 136), and I am unaware of any contemporary source which lists the Gyrwe or other fendwellers as unusually clumsy or careless folk. The Thames has produced many weapon-finds. Leaving aside the early eleventh-century arms cache frequently cited as lost during an attack on London Bridge, there is still the Wallingford sword (Evison 1968a),

the sword kept in the Tullie House Museum, Carlisle (Evison 1968b), and a seax from Battersea (British Museum catalogue M and LA 57.6–23.2). The river Witham at Lincoln has produced stirrups and a sword (British Museum catalogue M and LA 48.10–21.1 and 58.11–18.8), and so on. Wilson (1965, 50, 52) notes thirty-four late Anglo-Saxon river-finds of swords to eight finds in graves. Some of these must have resulted from accidental loss; again it would be silly to discount this explanation entirely, but how, exactly, whilst simply walking or riding through the countryside, does one just drop and lose a heavy three-foot iron weapon, sheathed and fastened to a belt? No matter how difficult it is now to understand the purposes of this, surely deliberate, deposition, swords were large, expensive, and treasured items, and it defies all credibility to suppose that the pre-Conquest English habitually dropped and lost them by accident whilst crossing streams and rivers, or whilst wandering into bogs, unaccompanied except by their most prized possessions.

Thus, in eighth- to eleventh-century England, independent of Scandinavian influence, the conclusion seems inevitable that the ritual deposition of artefacts was far from uncommon. From the disposal of wealth in hoards or in rivers it is a small step to placing objects in a grave, especially when there was a quiet but persistent ‘background noise’ of furnished inhumation in any case. Against this backdrop, the simple fact that a few northern families disposed of their dead by burying them, publicly, with grave-goods, will no longer suffice to categorize those families as Scandinavian settlers. But what if those objects were themselves of Scandinavian origin?

Telling the Difference: 2. Grave-goods

Some of the grave-goods in the unusual ninth- to tenth-century furnished inhumations are of indubitably Scandinavian type. They do not, however, amount to an enormous corpus. Oval brooches have been found at Claughton Hall (Edwards 1970), Bedale (Yorks) (Morris 1981b, 77; Shetelig 1940, 15, 19), and Santon Downham (Norfolk) (Shetelig 1940, 12–13). Other jewellery is less straightforwardly ‘Viking’. Ring-headed pins and thistle brooches belong originally to ‘Celtic’, especially Irish, material culture, although both were adopted by the Scandinavians. Neither form is common in burials: one ring-headed pin is known from the Sonning grave (Berks) (Evison 1969), the example from Brigham church (Cumbria) (Cowen 1934, 183; 1948a, 74) possibly came from a burial, and an equally uncertain example comes from Eaglesfield (Cumbria) (Cowen 1967a; 1967b). I know of no thistle-brooches of certain funerary provenance in England. A burial at Saffron Walden (Evison 1969, 337–41) contained pendants of possibly Scandinavian origin, but the other elements of the jewellery were English (Morris 1981b, 77). The Thor’s hammer in Repton grave 511 is an item of much clearer Scandinavian symbolism and significance (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 40–1).

Finds of weaponry are problematic. Axes are known from Hesketh-in-the-Forest, Beacon Hill, Aspatia (Cumbria) (Cowen 1948a, 74; Richards 1991, 114), Kildale (Yorks) (Morris 1981a, 235) and Repton (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 41; Shetelig 1940, 14). Since axes were rarely used as weapons in Anglo-Saxon England before their

use was popularized, under Danish influence, in the eleventh century, it seems reasonable to accept their Scandinavian typological associations.

The same cannot be said of other weapons. Swords are difficult to typologize, date, and assign origins. The general type of long, two-edged slashing sword remained more or less constant throughout the early medieval period, meaning that, unless decorated, swords are datable with difficulty. Furthermore, the potentially decorated and datable components of a sword—hilt, guard, pommel, blade, scabbard—may be associated with each other in different combinations over time through repair and modification; for decorative typologies, a sword does not constitute a ‘sealed context’. Nevertheless, the swords from the Wensley, Camphill (Yorks) (Shetelig 1940, 15, 17), and Santon Downham (Shetelig 1940, 13) burials are uncontroversially Anglo-Saxon, and that from the Whitbarrow Scar grave (Cumbria) looks like another of the same type (Hutton 1901, 93 and facing plate). Even the sword from Heath Wood, Ingleby mound 1 is reckoned to have been of English manufacture (Clarke and Fraser 1946, 10–11; Shetelig 1954, 78). Others have been assigned a Scandinavian provenance purely because they have a straight guard, whereas ‘typical’ late Anglo-Saxon guards are curved downwards (Petersen 1919, Type L), but most are in fact fairly undiagnostic, as at Kildale and Eaglesfield (Cowen 1948b; 1967b). The straight guard was common across western Europe and survived in England until at least the eighth century and perhaps into the ninth (Wilson 1965, 49). ‘English swords of other forms [than Petersen Type L] are difficult to affix in a typological series’ (Wilson 1964, 63). It seems very likely that straight-guarded swords could have remained common in northern England into the Viking period, especially if their popularity was reinforced by the use of similar swords brought from Scandinavia and elsewhere by settlers. The Ormside sword was thought (Cowen 1934, 170) to represent a local school of manufacture, and the sword from Sonning (accompanied by an Anglo-Saxon knife and a ‘Celtic’ ring-headed pin: Evison 1969) seems to have a plain, straight-guarded hilt fitted to a possibly English inlaid blade. Without decoration, it seems extremely hazardous to assign plain functional hilts of the very common western European Petersen Types H, I, and M to ‘Vikings’. Even the animal art on the lost Reading sword might be of Carolingian origin (Shetelig 1940, 12; 1954, 79–80). Spearheads are yet more problematic; most seem to be of standard ‘Carolingian’ or ‘late Saxon’ types.

All in all, then, very little of the material from the furnished burials of ninth- to tenth-century northern England may be assigned a Scandinavian origin. Whilst I must admit that the argument that the more successful a Viking was, the more non-Viking objects he would have in his grave has a certain attraction, the positivist in me yearns for an explanation which emerges more directly from patterns in the available material.

The Meanings of Distinction

Clearly, this evidence cannot be read as a straightforward reflection of Scandinavian settlement. For one thing, the body count would reduce the *Micel Here* to almost ‘Magnificent Seven’ proportions with which, I imagine, even Peter Sawyer would quibble.

Where are the other Scandinavian settlers? Either they were buried in archaeologically invisible fashion, such as by being set adrift in blazing boats (in what archaeologists might call burial of 'Type Kirk Douglas') or they felt no need to distinguish themselves from the natives in matters of death and burial. Blanket (and bland) reference to rapid assimilation or Christianization provides no explanation. There is nothing non-Christian about furnished inhumations, which are largely not very different from most other graves; many, moreover, are in churchyards. Except for the Heath Wood, Ingleby cremations and, perhaps, Repton grave 511 (adjacent to a church but accompanied by a Thor's hammer), this evidence cannot, thus, even be used to study the impact of Christianity, or pagan-Christian relations (even in Hadley's cautious formulation, 1997, 89–90).

We need to ask that fundamental, but hardly ever posed, question: why did people bury their dead like this? Passive reflection of either religion and geographical origins (calling the latter 'ethnicity' dignifies usual explanations with more subtlety than they deserve) does not explain it. Nor will a blanket explanation of 'grave-goods' suffice—many different types of grave-goods burial exist. Let us, then, review the evidence. We have a few graves, seemingly all of adults, and mostly (apparently) of adult males, accompanied by not particularly lavish grave-goods. Hesketh-in-the-Forest probably has the most elaborate assemblage, followed by Beacon Hill, Kildale, and Repton grave 511. None of the latter group would stand out in a sixth-century context, or compare to the Manx (Bersu and Wilson 1966) or Scottish (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 113–42) Viking burials, and we have no large communal cemetery with grave-goods, like Kilmainham (Eire) (Bøe 1940, 11–65). Both contrasts impact crucially on our understanding. The date of the English graves is difficult to establish but they seem generally to fall within a generation or so either side of 900.

We must consider the grave as the focus for ritual and the transmission of information, as a text (Halsall 1998a). We need to address the audience of such texts and their temporal dimension—for how long could they be 'read'. Another obvious, but often overlooked, point is that grave-goods ritual is transient; once the grave is filled in the display is no longer visible. To be meaningful, therefore, it needs an audience present at the funeral. In that regard it is no surprise that several of these burials are to be found in or by churches. As Frederick Paxton (1990) has clearly demonstrated, the early medieval funeral mass aimed to unify a community around the dead and the grieving family. Christian ritual took place from the death-bed to the graveside, and there were doubtless secular rituals such as feasting as well (Bullough 1981, 188, 199). North of the Thames, in the decades around 900, some families used these communal assemblies to display and bury with the deceased symbols of local standing, power, and wealth: most notably, weaponry was used this way (probably for its violent symbolism (Halsall 1998b, 3–4), but on occasion, perhaps also to symbolize hunting, a quintessentially aristocratic pastime which also demonstrates leadership), but also riding equipment (again the aristocratic symbolism is clear), and elaborate costume. Occasionally other items might be included, such as a sickle at Hesketh-in-the-Forest (symbolic of control of the harvest?) and a set of balances (representing authority over 'weights

and measures'?) at Kildale. The public display of symbols of power during lavish funerals, especially if accompanied by feasting (the giving of food was one of the major foci of the socially embedded early medieval economy), suggests that the death of these adults caused stress in the web of local power relationships, tension which had to be eased by the use of ritual.

A context for such local tensions around 900 is not difficult to find: changes in the patterns of political power in the north at that time were intimately, if not entirely, tied to the creation of the Scandinavian Danelaw earldoms and the kingdom of York. This was a period of significant social change. Estate structures may have been modified or renegotiated (Hadley 1996), and fairly dramatic urban development took place (Hall 1989; Clarke and Ambrosiani 1991, 90–106 and refs) which must also have impacted upon rural power and society. In this setting it is not surprising to see the occasional use of funerary ritual to maintain—particularly, perhaps, to succeed to—local power. Nor is it surprising that some of the material used should be Scandinavian or have Scandinavian referents; the new political powers were Scandinavian, authority could be well displayed by demonstrating connection with them, and the local and regional identities forged in this period probably hinged on links with the 'Danes'. The use of material culture to create such situational 'ethnicities', even (perhaps especially) where the people involved did not originate from the geographical areas identified as the 'homeland' of the *gens*, is well attested in the early medieval West (Pohl 1998; see also Innes, this volume). The fictive nature of such identities is possibly underlined by the use of material which, if anything, is of Hiberno-Norse origin. Some of those buried in these graves may indeed have been of Scandinavian origin; the purpose of this chapter has not been to deny that, but rather to show that the archaeological evidence does not, of itself, necessarily reveal Scandinavian settlement.

But these graves are few and far between, and the rite does not seem to have been used for more than a generation or two, usually only one within a particular site. This suggests that this tension, generally, represented a momentary crisis soon weathered. This would contrast with Kilmainham where, in a new immigrant urban community, we might expect more intense and lasting competition between families for local status. In comparison with other early medieval contexts, Viking Age and earlier, the English grave-goods are not especially lavish, revealing, in my interpretation, that there were other means of establishing local authority, by reference to established sources of power. On the peripheries, away from such sources of power, social competition manifested by grave-goods is often more intense (e.g. on the northern edges of the Merovingian world (Halsall 1995b, 251–4, 264–7)). This further suggests that the crisis around 900 was not that cataclysmic. It, perhaps, also helps us to understand why Viking burial in Scotland and the Isles is so much more lavish and dramatic. The argument might, furthermore, go some way towards explaining the greater concentration of these burials in Cumbria, a political twilight-zone where there may have been a tradition of mound burial. Unlike grave-goods, burial mounds attempt to create a permanently readable 'text', perhaps aimed at a wider community. Here, competition for local authority and its maintenance may have required greater use of funerary display.

Finally, this interpretation has a bearing on Heath Wood, Ingleby. This, as stated, is the only clearly intrusive Danish pagan cemetery. This community cremated its dead and buried them under mounds on a ridge. Whether or not this was part of a specific 'dialogue' with the Repton burials (Richards, Jecock, Richmond, and Tuck 1995), it was part of a dialogue with *someone*, and the location of Ingleby, close to the Anglo-Danish frontier is precisely the context one would expect for such an unusual ritual display of difference. The cemetery's fairly early date also suggests that the creation of this frontier led, briefly, to heightened awareness of new differences (Kershaw, this volume). Beyond Ingleby, the scattered furnished inhumation graves of later ninth- and early tenth-century England tell us little about the actual settlement of Scandinavian immigrants in England (which is not to deny that such settlement took place). They have little bearing on Christian-pagan relationships and even less on the rather tired and uninteresting debates about the numbers of settlers. However, they do have the potential to yield interesting information on the social and political context of the Scandinavian settlement and on some of the local tensions produced, at least in part, by cultures in contact.¹

¹ I am grateful to Dr Dawn Hadley for helpful initial bibliographical orientation, and to her and Dr Julian Richards for their editorial patience. I am also very grateful to Dr Bonnie Effros for numerous very interesting and useful references and discussions of early medieval burial practice.

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All in the Genes? Evaluating the Biological Evidence of Contact and Migration

MARTIN PAUL EVISON

Hopes have been raised in recent years that it may be possible to distinguish immigrant communities of early medieval Britain from their indigenous neighbours on the basis of skeletal morphology or genetic evidence. This is not a new idea. More than a hundred years ago anthropologists believed they could determine the origins of Britain's inhabitants on the basis of anthropometric measurements taken from living individuals and skeletal collections. For John Beddoe (1885, 2) the existence of anatomical traits in the population of Victorian England that could be attributed to its racial forebears was a truth obscured only by poor scientific practice:

it is of little use to appeal to current opinion, or the results of casual observation. [. . .]

This fact, together with the inveterate tendency of so many scientific observers, to see everything as they wish and expect it to be, rather than as it is, may account for the striking discrepancies among ethnological writers on this simple matter of fact.

It is now known that these studies were flawed in a number of ways, and our understanding of human biological variation has since changed fundamentally. Skeletal measurements have proved to be poor indicators of heredity, and it is evident that cultural characteristics are not inherited. The discovery of genetic variation at the DNA level has not made past migrations to the British Isles transparent, but it has served to indicate the complexity of population structure. Paradoxically, historical interpretations of genetic evidence tend to be couched in terms which indicate that romantic views of history continue to influence the scientific agenda. This chapter is a review of the literature on scientific studies which attempt to identify early medieval migrations into the British Isles on the basis of biological evidence.

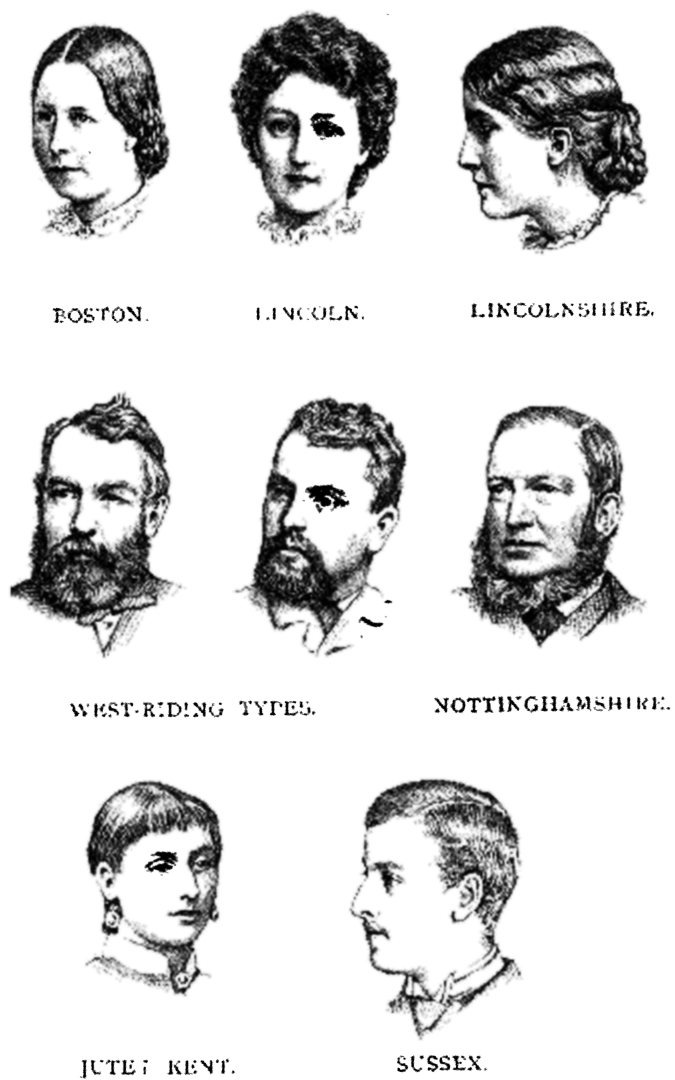


Fig. 25. The races of Britain (from Beddoe 1885)

The Demise of 'Race'

John Beddoe's *The Races of Britain* (1885) was based on a prize-winning essay presented to the Welsh National Eisteddfod in 1868. Beddoe's measurements of eye colour, hair colour, and various parameters and indices of the skull provided the basis for a description of the racial origins of Britain's regional inhabitants interwoven with discussions of ethnology, geography, and history. With gravure images of elegant Victorians labelled 'Bronze type, from Cumbria' or 'Jute ? Kent' (fig. 25) and laced with references to social class and character, these accounts may seem a charming anachronism to the contemporary reader. They are certainly a testament to Beddoe's own admonishments (see above). Carleton Coon's *The Races of Europe*, which appeared rather ominously in 1939, was quite in keeping with the outlook of Beddoe's work of the previous century, although the photographic images of various 'racial types'—an 'upper class Russian', for example—now appear demeaning. References to 'Megalithic people', 'corded people', and so on, illustrate a common propensity to equate archaeological horizons simplistically with the spread of peoples. Beddoe's work is, surprisingly, more cautious in this regard, perhaps reflecting a growth in the influence of archaeology upon physical anthropology during the intervening period. Although neither work is strikingly malevolent in tone—Beddoe's reflecting a matter-of-fact acceptance of the *status quo* typical of Victorian England—an inherent feature of racial anthropology was not only its claim to detect defining biological differences between ethnic groups, but also to rank these groups in a moral hierarchy, with northern Europeans at the top. In *Racial Origins of English Character*, written in 1926, R.N. Bradley (1926, 138) felt able to explain English moral, intellectual, economic, social, and artistic qualities in terms of a racial constitution derived from anthropometric analyses: 'the Nordic strives with his will and his courage; the Alpine with dogged, plodding determination; but it eventuates that the greatest triumphs, as well as the greatest failures fall to the Mediterranean'.

There were some dissenting voices. In 1934 Paul Radin's polemic *The Racial Myth* railed against the political manipulation of accounts of racial origin and destiny, particularly in Germany, and Huxley and Haddon (1935) offered a biological perspective. Franz Boas had recognized that some skeletal traits used in racial studies were highly malleable and need not provide a reliable reflection of genetic heredity at all. In *Race, Language and Culture*, Boas (1940, 7) wrote that in 'varying environments human forms are not absolutely stable, and many of the anatomical traits of the body are subject to a limited amount of change according to climate and conditions of life'. Boas saw the 'stratification of racial layers' as the root of major social conflict in the United States and sought to dissociate the biological from the cultural dimensions of society.

Racial anthropology had become undermined scientifically, but it was socio-political circumstances accompanying the defeat of Nazi Germany which effectively meant its end as a respectable 'scientific' pursuit. It now seems clear that physical anthropology (see Marks 1995; Tucker 1994) and archaeology (see Trigger 1989) had

become, in turn, the servants of Victorian imperialism, and Nazi expansionism and eugenics.

Following the discovery of the ABO system of blood groups in 1901, studies of blood group distributions began to provide the source of a scientific challenge to racial taxonomy and the basis of the current understanding of human biological variation. Blood proteins are not subject to significant environmental or cultural influences and therefore offer a far more reliable guide to the genetics of populations than skeletal parameters. Studies of blood groups—and latterly of DNA sequence variability itself—have established that genetic variation in humans is limited as a proportion of the total genetic complement, and that the variation that does exist does not segregate along ethnic or national lines. The range of genetic variation within an ethnic group is larger than the net genetic difference between ethnic groups. There are no genetic variants which are exclusive to any ethnic group and possessed by all members of that group. It is not possible to devise a racial taxonomy of humans. It has also become clear that personality and character are subject to major environmental and cultural influences. The work of ‘racial psychologists’, who claim that differences in average IQ between ethnic groups are genetically determined, has attracted considerable criticism from geneticists (e.g. Cavalli-Sforza and Cavalli-Sforza 1995). Genes provide the code for cell surface proteins, for example, but not stiff upper lips!

Genetic Variation in North-West Europe

Studies of ABO distributions have been supplemented by those of other blood group systems in Britain and elsewhere (Kopec 1970; Mourant, Kopec, and Domaniewska-Sobczak 1976). The encyclopaedic *History and Geography of Human Genes* (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza 1994) represents the most recent attempt to summarize the data. It is clear from the genetic maps presented in these compendia that, whilst humanity is not homogeneous (we are not all genetically identical), there are few universal underlying trends. Different genes show different distribution patterns. The pattern of variation in some gene frequencies is gradual or ‘clinal’ in nature, and a statistical analysis by Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza (1994) has established that there is a trend for some gene frequencies to rise or fall in a south-east to north-west direction across Europe. In principle, one might hope to demonstrate past migrations from one part of Europe to another by showing a genetic influence on one part attributable to another. Differences in the frequencies of genetic variants between adjacent countries of north-west Europe are limited, however.

The Patterns Evident in the United Kingdom

A variety of studies of genetic variation in the British Isles have been published in recent decades. Ada Kopec’s *The Distribution of Blood Groups in the United Kingdom* (1970) summarizes the data at a national level. Local studies have been completed in the East Midlands (Mastana and Sokol 1998), the north and north-east of England

(Lanchbury, Papiha and Roberts 1990; Papiha and Roberts 1976; Roberts 1953), Cumbria (Roberts, Mitchell, and Creen 1981; Mitchell, Cook, and Sunderland 1977), south-west Scotland (Mitchell, Izatt, Sunderland, and Cartwright 1976), Orkney (Roberts 1986; 1985), Shetland (Roberts 1990), Wales (Harper and Sunderland 1986), and Ireland (Tills, Teesdale, and Mourant 1977; Dawson 1964).

The demands for a national reserve of transfusable blood during World War II provided an early impetus for population studies. Support for a historic Scandinavian connection was postulated for Scotland and northern England from an early stage: 'It has been customary for ethnologists to suppose that the northern inhabitants of Britain differ from their southern neighbours by reason of a greater infiltration of Scandinavian blood' (Fisher and Taylor 1940, 145). They found that the ABO-A frequencies in Scotland and northern England did not correspond well with modern Scandinavia (where A is high) so they used Iceland (where A is low) as a proxy for a medieval Scandinavian population. Brown (1965; cf. Roberts 1953, 380) also postulated a relationship between A frequencies and Norse settlement in northern Scotland. A comprehensive study of ABO variation in the north of England by J.A.F. Roberts (1953) detected a sudden fall in A frequencies north of the Rivers Humber and Aire, but regarded geography rather than history as the explanatory factor.

The possible value of population genetics in yielding clues to migration was alluded to by Peter Sawyer in *The Age of the Vikings* (1971, 255–6). By this stage, the similarity of A frequencies in the north and west of Britain to those of Iceland were put down to settlers from the British Isles. Peninsular Scandinavia was dropped in favour of Denmark (where A frequencies are somewhat lower) as the likely source of migrants to the north of England, but a localized area of raised A frequency detected by Kopec (1970) unfortunately did not include most of Yorkshire and north-west Lincolnshire. Both Sawyer (1971, 256) and Watkin (1952) refer to proposed evidence of 'Viking' settlement in south Pembrokeshire, where an area of raised A gene frequency was detected. It may seem surprising to the reader that Scandinavian connections seem able to be supported in some way whatever the level of A frequency of the donating or receiving populations.

A more substantial attempt to integrate history and blood groups was made by W.T.W. Potts (1976) as a contribution to Sawyer's *Medieval Settlement: continuity and change*, but perhaps more revealing is the commentary chapter which follows (Sunderland 1976). Sunderland offers pertinent reminders that small effective population sizes and a tendency to marry locally may account for much local patterning in gene distributions and that any such processes affecting a founding population would be passed on to subsequent generations; that the genetic constitution of a 'hybrid' population will be a consequence of the size of the 'parental' populations as well as their relative gene frequencies—to which could be added the effect of fertility and reproductive rate (D.F. Roberts pers. comm.); and that mass migrations are likely to have a substantial effect on the demography of the place of origin as well as the place of settlement.

Each factor may result in misleading interpretations of the presence or absence of

evidence for migration, and technological and social constraints are likely to have affected the degree of individual mobility prevailing in past societies. Sunderland (1976, 256) also recognizes the importance of sample size, statistical testing, and not relying on the patterns of variation in only a small number of genetic systems: 'populations which differ in respect of one blood group system may be alike in terms of one or more others and how is one to establish which state of affairs is more significant when viewed in terms of population history? It is, I would suggest, essential to utilize statistical procedures which allow the amalgamation of data of several disparate types'. A trend toward incorporation of more genetic systems and of rigorous statistical testing is a feature of more recent population studies. Roberts, Mitchell, and Creen (1981) analysed 16 red blood cell antigens in over 1000 Cumbrian school children and subjected the results to a variety of statistical tests intended to establish the nature and significance of any variation in gene frequencies in the region. Their conclusion (1981, 143), in relation to the possibility of Scandinavian settlement, is perhaps worth quoting in full:

The fact that this region [the central mountains] is particularly distinguished by elevated frequencies of A_1 and Se, and that these two alleles are at substantially higher frequencies in Norway, combined with the evidence of place-names and history, suggest the possibility that the central Lake District population has remained genetically a relatively unadulterated relict of the original Norwegian settlement. But this is still at best an interesting suggestion, for how these differences come about, the extent to which they represent random divergence of gene frequencies, differential immigration, or retention of differences from the original settlements by colonists from populations of differing genetic constitution, remain matters of conjecture. Although consistent with other historical data, the genetic evidence of Scandinavian settlement is slight and open to alternative explanations.

A similar statistically based study by Roberts (1985; 1986, 103) led to the inference that Norwegian influence is today most pronounced in the northern islands of Orkney and that the genetic structure of Orkney may retain an element of an earlier population distinct from adjacent modern British Isles and north-west European populations. A similar, preliminary, conclusion is reached for Shetland (Roberts 1990), where a genetic affinity with Cumbria and Orkney is attributed to a common history of Norse settlement (cf. Falsetti and Sokal 1993, see below). Ireland, Lewis, and the Isle of Man do not appear to exhibit this influence, however (see Roberts 1990).

A Scandinavian connection has also been postulated for the English East Midlands (Mastana and Sokol 1998). The authors examined variation in 1117 individuals for 18 genetic systems, substantiated by a statistical analysis using a variety of different measures. Significant genetic diversity amongst sub-populations was detected, which could be attributed 'to chance or to real population subdivision' (Mastana and Sokol 1998, 61). Remarkably, perhaps, north-east Derbyshire showed negative relationships with other regional populations, but positive relationships with continental populations, notably Denmark. This relationship correlates with the distribution of Scandinavian

place-names which are found in north-east, but not north-west Derbyshire, although there are numerous factors which may have determined the distribution of place-names in the region, such as the fragmentation or survival of pre-existing estates and the speed with which estates reverted to English control (Hadley 1997). Despite initial caution regarding their level and significance, the authors invoke 'the colonisation of the East Midlands especially Derbyshire by independent waves of invaders each with a distinct gene pool' as the explanation for the pattern of gene frequency differences observed (Mastana and Sokol 1998, 66).

Genetic studies in Ireland show some evidence of the temptation to equate archaeological horizons with evidence for distinct 'peoples' (Dawson 1964, 56–7; Tills, Teesdale, and Mourant 1977, 32–3), which is not so prevalent in recent studies of British populations. Evidence of Scandinavian influence in Ireland is rarely postulated—in contrast to an interpretation of anthropometric data (Relethford and Crawford 1995), where an influence on the Irish Midlands is suggested despite a lack of significant archaeological corroboration (Mallory and Ó Donnabháin 1998, 64). Evidence of a genetic influence from the east is attributed to settlement from elsewhere in the British Isles, perhaps with some Danish Viking contribution (Tills, Teesdale, and Mourant 1977, 32). A recent study of different mutations in the phenylketonuria (PKU) gene (Zschocke, Mallory, Eiken, and Nevin 1997) attributes the pattern of variation in Ireland to the successive arrival of Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Norse settlers, but suffers from the usual weakness of studies of a single factor in that it may be contradicted by analysis of additional variables. Genetic studies in the Isle of Man (Mitchell and Sunderland 1978) indicate that the Manx population reflects its location in the north of the Irish Sea, having affinities with Irish, Welsh, and Cumbrian populations, but not being particularly representative of any of them. No Scandinavian affinities are readily apparent.

Wales has received relatively detailed treatment in comparison with other parts of the British Isles. Fisher and Vaughan (1939) detected a relationship between ABO frequencies and Welsh surnames in blood donated in southern England. Watkin's (1952) *Blood Groups in Wales and the Marches* details ABO frequencies throughout Wales, but the interpretation offered now seems old fashioned. Changes in ABO frequencies are explained in terms of ancient tribal territories, supported by evidence such as from archaeology, racial anthropology—of 'long headed brunets', for example—and from work on the 'genetic component of language' (Watkin 1952, 84). Watkin's (1952, 85) statement that 'the ancestors of the North Welsh originally hailed from North Africa or from as far east as the Caucasus' is no longer plausible, except in the vaguest sense. Although Ammerman and Cavalli-Sforza (1984) have proposed that agriculture spread from south-east Europe by demic diffusion during the Neolithic, carrying with it—according to Renfrew (1987)—Indo-European languages, this seems to bear little direct resemblance to Watkin's supposition.

A number of weaknesses in Watkin's associations with the Mediterranean can be attributed to the limited resolution which can be achieved using such a limited genetic system as ABO. Suggestions that raised A frequency in the Wirral, the Chester area, parts of the North Wales coast, and the Conwy valley could be attributed to Scandina-

vian settlement do have some historical and linguistic (place-name) support, however. A raised A frequency in Pembrokeshire is also attributed to Scandinavian settlement, although more recent studies have explained this anomaly as due to more recent migrations to the 'little England beyond Wales' (see below), illustrating that the patterns may be due to other historical explanations or chance fluctuations.

Harper and Sunderland (1986) gathered together a collection of geographic, linguistic, anthropometric, dermatoglyphic (finger and hand prints), and demographic studies of Welsh populations. The archaeological summary (Lynch 1986, 15–30) relies on anthropometric evidence and associations of novel cultural horizons with invasion far more than would be typical of contemporary writing on European prehistory. Watkin's (1986, 118–46) consideration of ABO distributions this time identifies a likely contribution of Flemish immigrants to Pembrokeshire in the Norman period to the raised A frequency there, although there is also a potential Norse connection (local islands have Scandinavian names) which is difficult to substantiate archaeologically. Watkin (1986, 139) remains convinced of a genetic and linguistic connection to North Africa and the east Mediterranean—on anthropometric, linguistic, and genetic grounds—and of an ancient relict population: 'on the moorlands and its fringes, traces of a third people whose ancestors are very probably one of Wales's very earliest inhabitants can still be detected'.

The concept of migration accompanying the arrival of Megalithic and Beaker cultures is also evident in Roberts's (1973) introduction to *Genetic Variation in Britain*, along with a discussion of the likely consequences of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking colonizations. Roberts accepts the existence of successive waves of invaders in a way which presently seems uncritical, but reflects the views of archaeologists prevalent at the time. Importantly, he does (1973, 14) observe that 'gene frequencies of successive waves probably did not differ greatly, apart from the founder effect, since almost all later invaders were from northwest Europe'. As recently as 1993, eminent geneticist Walter Bodmer (1993, 56) gave his interpretation of the genetics of Celtic populations in the Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture to the British Academy. With a quixotic reference to anthropometric factors, he attributes the basic pattern of genetic variation in Wales to a mixture of the original hunter-gatherer population of northern Europe (blond, high in HLA-A1 and B8 gene frequencies, but low in ABO-A) with 'darker' farmers migrating from Central Europe: 'No doubt these migrating farmers [. . .] fancied the blond, blue eyed women of the north. [. . .] It is perhaps this expanded population which represents the true Celts of the British Isles and which is thus quite different from the Celtic populations of Central Europe'. Bodmer (1993, 56) appears to follow Renfrew (1987) in suggesting that a common language and culture may have accompanied the spread of farming, as well as later invasions which had no genetic consequences: 'it seems possible, and indeed likely, that the relatively late Celtic invasions from Continental Europe, while they may have had a considerable cultural impact and, for example, influenced the spread of the Celtic language, may nevertheless have contributed comparatively little to genetic change'.

Bodmer appears implicitly to exclude Celtic invasions from Central Europe, as

these would presumably have left a detectable genetic signature. In doing so (1993, 56–7) he seems to infer invasions from Celtic-speaking populations on the near Continent which were not that different genetically from the natives. Genetically similar near neighbours do seem to have left a mark as far as the early medieval period is concerned, however: ‘preliminary genetic marker studies suggest that Cornwall has retained less of its Celtic identity than Wales (especially North Wales), probably because of greater admixture with the English. Scotland and Ireland on the other hand were more contaminated by the Vikings’. While Bodmer does not quite recognize that substantial cultural and linguistic change does not necessarily imply substantial invasion or colonization, other physical anthropologists and geneticists continue to seek ‘Celtic’ markers. Jackson (1995) has proposed that foot shape patterns in Britain may be related to Celtic ethnohistory. The shape of the foot has a limited and poorly understood genetic component, but is clearly subject to environmental and cultural influence. Little credence can be given to ethnohistoric interpretations based on such measurements. DNA sequences do not suffer from the weakness of susceptibility to environmental interference; nevertheless, the ‘Celtic’ genotypes detected in Cornwall (Hart, Jones, Laundy, and Ross 1996; Procter, Demaine, Millward, Doxsey, Mangles, Bunce, and Welsh 1996) are perhaps more properly labelled ‘western’ or ‘Atlantic fringe’, as they are likely to have practically no biological connection via the continental bearers of Hallstatt or La Tene culture, or the Celtic languages, or with the Celtic *ethnoi* of the Greek scholars.

With reference to the Cornish study of Harvey, Smith, Sheren, Bailey, and Hyndman (1986), Cole (1997) has warned that genetic studies may be weakened if based on poorly informed archaeological or historical assumptions, a problem which has frequently been highlighted during the course of this chapter. Cole also recognizes the propensity of the media to re-interpret radically genetic studies in terms of the untenable ‘culture equals race’ paradigm, as I have also discovered at some expense (Evison 1997, Wavell 1997).¹

In a study of *Genetic Structure of Human Populations in the British Isles*, Falsetti and Sokal (1993) tested 14 genetic systems in 331 British and Irish samples each consisting of at least 50 individuals—a large study, incorporating a number of statistical tests to establish the nature and significance of gene frequency variation. They detected an east to west gradient in ABO frequencies in Britain and Ireland which they attribute to ‘the spread of people from the east coast into the interior’ (Falsetti and Sokal 1993, 226), citing only the east to west movements of Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans in support of their argument. A south-north gradient in the ABO pattern is also discernible,

¹ The genetic variant thought to be common in the Anglo-Saxon ‘homelands’ may have less promise for Early Medieval studies than I thought at the time of writing (Evison 1997). The analysis, of mitochondrial DNA lineages, is being carried out in Professor Bryan Sykes’s laboratory at Oxford University.

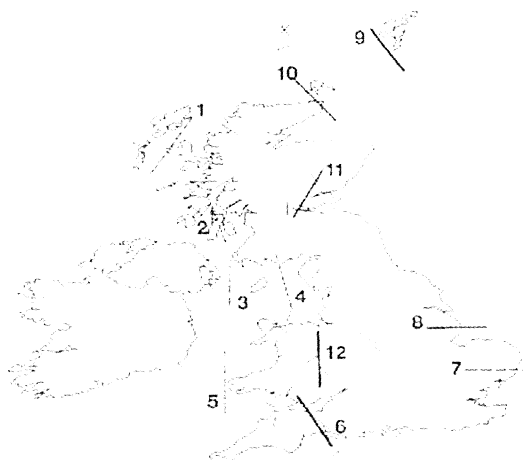


Fig. 26. Genetic boundaries in Britain (after Falsetti and Sokal 1993)

however, accompanied by varying degrees of regional complexity, an observation supported by a number of other studies (see above). The results would seem to warrant a far more sophisticated explanation, in terms of genetics and history.

An interesting aspect of Falsetti and Sokal's work is their map of boundaries of sharp genetic change in the British Isles (fig. 26). A significant feature of the map is that all but three boundaries are topographic, a pattern consistent with the continent of Europe as a whole (Barbujani and Sokal 1990). One of the remaining boundaries, it could be argued, is close to the frequently inhospitable upland region of Dartmoor and Exmoor, although the authors attribute this boundary to ancient ethnic differences. The boundary between the Northern Isles and the British mainland is also attributed to ethnic (Norse) intrusion; although, paradoxically, the boundary between Orkney and Shetland is put down to lack of 'interdigitation' between these communities, despite their assumed ethnic similarity. As the studies of Falsetti and Sokal, and Barbujani and Sokal, have shown, topographic boundaries are often also linguistic boundaries. The extent to which language and genetics correlate has been the subject of considerable debate which is outside the scope of this chapter. Language may be a barrier to gene flow, or alternatively, it may be common for ethnic groups to choose topographic boundaries as convenient delimiters of territory, and it is topography which is again the real decelerator of gene flow. In that genetic maps reveal the direction and extent of population admixture, they are clear evidence of contact and migration between the British Isles and their Atlantic, North Sea, and continental neighbours.

Falsetti and Sokal attribute the boundary in Suffolk (fig. 26, boundary 7) to genetic differences in the founding populations of Angles and Jutes in the fifth century. No boundary to the west of Jutish territory is postulated, however, and evidence of other boundaries attributable to inter-tribal borders of the British Iron Age or sub-Roman periods is minimal. It is perhaps more likely that the apparent boundary is due to

independent routes of communication and settlement, and hence genetic admixture, channelled separately via the seaways of the Wash and the Thames estuaries, which may in turn have tended to attract migrants from different points of origin on the continental European coast. Having seemingly come full circle to Beddoe's (1885) detection of Jutish types in the modern population, I would like briefly to consider recent archaeological studies.

Archaeological Studies

Studies of Viking Age skeletal material have recently come to prominence following the inference of ethnicity from the remains excavated in the 'mass burial' at Repton (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 45, and discussed further in the BBC 'Timewatch' programme, 1995; see also Halsall, this volume). In the absence of published research on the supposed Scandinavian material, I will turn instead to Heinrich Härke's (1990) study of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in order to consider some relevant issues. Härke proposes that the skeletons of male Anglo-Saxon migrants can be distinguished from those of indigenous individuals by height and other, non-metric, skeletal traits. Skeletal measurements are used as indicators of genetic and hence ethnic affiliation, corroborated by evidence from grave goods. Skeletal studies have been used to infer differences between indigenous and intrusive populations before. Differences in skull morphology between Neolithic indigenes and Beaker colonists, and between Anglo-Saxons and their British Iron Age predecessors, have been postulated (Morant 1926; Hooke and Morant 1926). These studies, like Härke's, are open to criticism on both statistical and methodological grounds (see also Brothwell 1973).

As we have established in relation to genetic studies, results obtained from a single factor can easily be contradicted if additional relevant variables are examined. The factor chosen, in this case height, is subject to further errors introduced by its estimation from long bone length. Although clearly having a genetic component, height is a skeletal factor strongly subject to environmental influences, such as social class, health, and diet (see Mascie-Taylor and Lasker 1995 for a recent study). Certain modern social groups, such as jockeys and police officers, for example, can be assortative for stature. Also, as Boas (1940) established early in the twentieth century, other skeletal parameters once thought to be under direct genetic control are known to change within a small number of generations.

Genetic studies have also illustrated the need for rigorous statistical testing. Are the differences in height between weapon bearing and non-weapon bearing burials, and Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon skeletal populations, detected in Härke's study statistically significant? Statistical testing would also establish whether patterns of hypoplasia, which are used to control for developmental factors, also follow a significant pattern. Sceptics will question the value of dental hypoplasia alone as a control for the influence of diet and health on development; although, in an archaeological context there may be little else to go on. Are perceived differences between mean height in Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries due to genetic admixture or an independent

long-term trend in increase in mean height evident since the Iron Age? The pattern of height and hypoplasia in female burials may also be revealing. The study is supplemented by an analysis of non-metric 'epigenetic' skeletal traits (such as metopic sutures, Wormian bones, etc.) from two of the populations studied, and it would be interesting to see what effect statistical testing and the inclusion of data from all of the five skeletal populations might have on the proposed segregation of the characters. The pattern of segregation in females would be expected to correspond with that of the males if co-residential, but non-interbreeding, families are present. In the absence of this corroborating evidence and of statistical validation, the readily apparent explanation of Härke's results is a cultural preference for the incorporation of tall men into a warrior stratum. This leaves the ancestral origins and ethnic identity of these warriors open to speculation.

The recent discovery of genetic material surviving in archaeological bone would avoid the problem of developmental interference experienced in skeletal studies and may allow some historical models to be verified by permitting demographic 'slices in time' to be studied. Studies of ancient DNA from skeletal material in North America (Stone and Stoneking 1993), Polynesia (Hagelberg and Clegg 1993), and China and Japan (Oota, Saitou, Matsushita, and Ueda 1999) have been used to corroborate patterns of prehistoric migration derived from modern genetic evidence. Britain has not so far proved to be a very good source of archaeological human DNA (Richards, Sykes, and Hedges 1995, Evison, Fieller, and Smillie 1999), and it may be some time before ancient DNA research will yield sufficient positive results for statistical confidence in any population genetic analysis. While there may be differences in gene frequencies between modern British and Scandinavian populations—in those coding for fair hair and blue eyes, for example—one cannot tell an *individual* Briton from an *individual* Scandinavian genetically and it is most unlikely that there will ever be a morphological or ancient DNA test to estimate—let alone determine—whether an individual skeleton is likely to have belonged to a Briton, Viking, or Anglo-Saxon.

Studies of skeletal populations using ancient DNA may eventually allow broad genetic affinities to be inferred. Whilst this may aid the interpretation of the general history of a community, it would still not permit a simple equation of genotype with ethnic affiliation, which may change during the course of a life time. The propensity of local groups to 'follow' the Viking armies in England (Morris 1977, 94; Stafford 1989, 24) and in continental Europe (Lund 1989) is just one illustration of the complexity which would be encountered in attempting to use genetic analyses to unravel ethnic identity in the early medieval period (see also Innes, this volume). Ancient DNA tests used to establish the biological sex of a skeleton (Stone, Milner, Pääbo, and Stoneking 1996) or to assess possible biological kin relationships in burial contexts (Kurosaki, Matsushita, and Ueda 1993) are likely to prove more productive in Britain for the time being.

Härke (1998) has criticized scepticism about the importance and significance of migration amongst British archaeologists as being based on ideologically derived prejudices. It is increasingly clear that the underlying pattern of gene distributions in

Europe goes back to the Palaeolithic (Sykes 1998; 1999; and see Evison 1999), but that there has since been a continual process of change which can be attributed to genetic drift, natural selection, due to disease, for example, and inter-marriage, settlement and migration. 'Migration as explanation' (see for example Chapman and Hamerow 1997; Anthony 1990, 1992; Chapman and Dolukhanov 1992; and Scull 1995) may be complex and problematic or flawed and overstated (see Trafford, this volume). Nevertheless, it is most likely that exclusively 'indigenist' interpretations of history and prehistory are implicitly excluding real lives and events. Given the ideological form of criticism of migration in archaeology, it is ironic that the isolation inherent in extremely indigenist models would almost inevitably have led to genetic divergence (not to the genetic admixture which is apparent) and potentially, ultimately, to the development of separate races. Although it may be difficult to detect unambiguously migrants using skeletal or genetic evidence, it would be a mistake to relegate the movement of individuals and groups of people to a position of irrelevance as the fashionable indigenism seems to do. Such processes have always been and continue to be major social factors in Britain and elsewhere.

Discussion

In this chapter I have attempted to illustrate a number of issues concerning the analysis of biological evidence relating to contact and migration: 1) the disadvantages of using physical measurements (such as height) subject to environmental influence; 2) the advantages of using genetic measurements (such as ABO blood group) not subject to environmental influence; 3) the importance of statistical testing to establish the significance of perceived similarities or differences; 4) that humans cannot be divided into discrete biological taxa or 'races'; 5) that variations in culture or character are not genetically encoded; 6) that linguistic or cultural traits cannot be used *a priori* as proxies for the spread of people; 7) that adjacent European populations are quite similar genetically; 8) that historical interpretations of population genetics continue to resort to romantic paradigms (Falsetti and Sokal 1993, 227; Mastana and Sokol 1998, 66; Bodmer 1993, 56), while contemporary models in history, archaeology and anthropology have become increasingly complex; ix) and that exclusively 'indigenist' models of history are no more tenable than simplistically 'migrationist' ones.

Although I have adopted a sceptical approach, I believe there is genetic evidence which can plausibly be interpreted as reflecting Scandinavian influx, albeit in regions (such as Cumbria and north-east Derbyshire) that were relatively sparsely populated prior to settlement. In other regions any minor differences in gene frequencies may simply have been 'swamped' by the indigenous population.

In this chapter, discussion has been restricted to studies with immediate relevance to the early medieval period. A good deal is also known about population structure, marriage patterns, surname distributions, and migration in the recent and historic periods which has been outside the scope of this chapter, but which enables demographic interpretations based on Viking Age skeletal material to be put into an empirical

context. Novel genetic approaches, such as analyses of maternally inherited mitochondrial DNA and paternally inherited Y chromosome polymorphisms, may yield new results and evidence of further complexity which may in turn affect interpretations of Scandinavian settlement in England. There is evidently a fundamental requirement for better inter-disciplinary collaboration and integration of genetic and archaeological or historical studies, if the regionally and temporally complex and highly interactive processes of ethnic change are to be understood. A recent assessment of the potential for integrated genetic and archaeological research in Ireland may show promise in this regard (Mallory and Ó Donnabháin 1998). If the mode of transmission—demographic *versus* cultural—is in dispute or the extent of a proposed migration is in question, then genetic evidence may be the sole arbiter, but where the ‘parental’ populations are similar in gene frequencies and numbers—as may often have been the case for immigrant and indigenous communities in early medieval England—it may not be possible to establish an unequivocal distinction between the two. Although genetic studies of modern and ancient populations permit general inferences regarding demographic origins and history to be made, neither genetic nor skeletal markers can be used as direct measures of ethnic affiliation—biology and culture cannot simply be equated.²

² I would like to thank Andrew Chamberlain for providing many useful comments on the analysis and interpretation of early medieval skeletal material, and Derek Roberts for kindly offering advice on the content of this chapter and on the influence of archaeology on the interpretation of population genetic studies.

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Identifying Anglo-Scandinavian Settlements

JULIAN D. RICHARDS

In this chapter I will address the question of whether it is possible to identify Scandinavian settlements in the Danelaw from archaeological evidence. Previous studies have found this problematic, although there has been little discussion of why this should be the case. In 1976 David Wilson (112) wrote, ‘as far as we can tell, of the Scandinavian areas of England, the few houses of Viking Age date that have been found are indistinguishable from contemporary English buildings’. Later (1991, 37), I wrote that ‘few Viking Age rural settlements have been excavated, and even fewer can be positively identified as the homes of Scandinavian settlers’, and (1991, 69) that ‘it is difficult to recognize anything specifically Viking about the Viking Age buildings of England and the Isle of Man’.

It remains true that there are very few excavated settlements of the period 800–1000. Given the growing numbers of Iron Age, Roman, and even early Anglo-Saxon settlements, this raises the obvious question of why Scandinavian settlement remains so elusive. Wilson (1976, 112) explained it in terms of a dominant Scandinavian elite using local builders so that ‘the houses were built by a subject population for their new masters’. If the incomers were dominant, however, one might argue that they would also choose to have buildings constructed according to their own fashion. Another explanation, proposed by both myself (1991, 37) and Richard Hall (1990, 22), is that the houses and farms they occupied are buried underneath modern counterparts. Similarly, Nick Higham (1985, 43) wrote that ‘the bulk of Norse settlements underlie existing farm sites, hamlets or villages and as such have either not been discovered, or have been destroyed by later building activity’. The paucity of sites is therefore explained as the result of their success: ‘Where Viking farms have been excavated, either in this country

or in Scandinavia, their excavation took place because the farmstead never developed further' (Edwards 1998, 5).

Should the research agenda for Viking archaeology for the next millennium, therefore, be to look for ninth- and tenth-century settlements, which have hitherto remained invisible in the archaeological record? How would one go about it? In addressing these questions, it may be instructive to examine how Scandinavian settlements have been identified archaeologically in other areas of Norse settlement.

What Do Scandinavian Settlements Look Like?

There are three ways in which Scandinavian settlements have been identified elsewhere in the British Isles: 1) building form, 2) settlement disruption or dislocation, and 3) artefactual assemblage. The introduction of new building types is one of the principal means by which Norse sites have been identified in Scotland and the Isles: 'The most striking archaeological evidence for a changed social and ethnic situation is the dramatic difference in building styles' (Crawford 1987, 140). Nowhere is the contrast clearer than at the curious site of the Braaid, on the Isle of Man: 'The conjunction of the two different types of building tradition is seen in dramatic juxtaposition at the Braaid, Marown, in the Isle of Man' (Crawford 1987, 141). There, the round house is generally interpreted as a native structure, whilst both the rectilinear and the small bow-sided building are seen as Norse additions, despite the fact that there is no stratigraphic evidence to suggest anything other than contemporaneity of all three buildings.

At the classic Shetland Norse site at Jarlshof, John Hamilton defined the first Norse phase by the introduction of an aisled sub-rectangular long house, with dry stone walls with an earthen core. There were several outbuildings, including one built of upright slabs supporting horizontal masonry. Hamilton (1956, 111) noted that 'though rectangular in plan, the technique employed recalls the tradition of stonework common in pre-Viking times', interpreting it as a house for 'native serfs'. On several sites, such as Buckquoy on Orkney, there is a juxtaposition of Norse longhouses over Pictish circular figure-of-eight forms. In the case of House 3 at Buckquoy the curved gable and sunken form have raised the possibility that it was originally a Pictish construction (Ritchie 1976–7). At Birsay cellular timber and stone buildings were superseded by stone double-walled buildings (Hunter 1986). At Skail, Deerness, Gelling (1984) suggested that the earliest Norse building (House 2) was built from the fragmentary remains of an underlying, roughly rectangular structure which was defined as Pictish (House 1), although Buteux (1997) indicates that on stratigraphic grounds it could equally well be Norse. At Pool, Sanday, an extensive area of the site was paved over in the sixth century (Hunter 1990). As an integral part of this phase, John Hunter records the presence of a rectangular courtyard more in keeping with Norse architectural styles than with expected native traditions. This unambiguous dating of a rectangular building to the pre-Viking period clearly throws doubt upon the common assumption, applied elsewhere, that Pictish buildings are always cellular.

	PICTISH TRAITS	SCANDINAVIAN TRAITS
Plan	Circular or axial plan, latter tending to be sub-rectangular	Rectilinear; frequently bow-sided
Construction technique	Horizontal masonry and upright slabs	Horizontal slabs only, sometimes with turf facing
Roofing	Stone corbelling	Turf roofs supported by rows of double posts
Rooms	Divided by slab-lined piers	
Fittings		Central hearths; wall benches
Materials	Predominately stone	Stone with extensive use of wood

Fig. 27. Pictish vs Scandinavian building characteristics

In summary, those studying settlement in the Scandinavian colonies have tended to associate specific building characteristics with ethnic labels (fig. 27). Yet in practice there are reasons for doubting an unambiguous attribution of ethnic identity to building morphology.

Settlement disruption or dislocation has also been associated with the arrival of Scandinavian settlers, although a variety of causal factors can lead to changes in settlement pattern, and this must be used in conjunction with other forms of evidence. At Doarlish Cashen, on the Isle of Man, the establishment of the settlement on previously unoccupied marginal uplands is taken as one of the reasons for describing this as a Norse homestead: 'There is no reason to doubt that the builder of the Doarlish Cashen house, who had been squeezed out to the very edge of the cultivable land, was of Norse stock' (Gelling 1970, 81). At both Buckquoy and at The Udal on North Uist a localized settlement shift associated with new building types has been taken as evidence of Scandinavian intrusion. At The Udal the combination of each of the key attributes for Norse settlement on one site is seen as indicating violent takeover: 'Rectangular Norse structures were found superimposed on the cellular buildings of the native population, with an accompanying change in material culture. [. . .] These combined circumstances suggest strongly that the Viking incursion [. . .] was violent in nature (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 80)'. At Pool, changes in economy, such as the introduction of flax, have been taken as an indicator of cultural change associated with Scandinavian takeover (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 171).

The appearance of new artefact types, either in style or form, in settlement assemblages has generally been taken to indicate the arrival of a new people. Midden debris is frequently equivocal however. At Buckquoy the second phase of Norse activity is associated with ten bone pins, several of which appear to be of native, rather than specifically Norse, manufacture. Other objects, including a comb and three sheards of pottery also have pre-Norse affinities, whilst a stone gaming-board has been described

as a board specifically for the Scandinavian game *hnefatafl* (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 163). The suggested mixed assemblage has taken on great significance in discussions of Norse-Pictish relations, but it should be noted that the evidence for the first Norse phase (House 3 above) is also less than clear. At Pool as well the first phases show an admixture of both native and Norse types, causing Hunter (1990) to question further the cultural pedigree of the building.

Frequently, steatite vessels are seen as distinctively Scandinavian artefacts. However, the likely presence of a Pictish royal site at the Shetland soapstone quarry at Cunningsburgh (Graham-Campbell and Batey 1998, 64–5) must at least prompt the question of when the quarry was first exploited. Settlement assemblages of the period tend in any case to be very sparse. Manx farmsteads at Doarlish Cashen and the Braaid have yielded no artefactual remains. Whilst artefactual evidence has played a critical role in identifying supposed Viking burials (Halsall, this volume), it has infrequently been used to identify Scandinavian settlements.

Can Scandinavian Settlements be Identified in the Danelaw?

How far can these same factors be used in the identification of Scandinavian settlement in the Danelaw? Immediately, there appears to be a problem as distinctive Scandinavian building forms have not been found. In this regard Wilson's (1968, 302) statement of thirty years ago still holds true: 'We have no settlement sites of uniquely Viking character in England of a type that occur in the Celtic area of Britain'. Even in the north-west there have been difficulties in identifying Norse farmsteads. In this area there are a number of diagnostic Scandinavian burials (Richards 1991, 113–14; Edwards 1998, 8–24), but an obvious lack of distinctive Scandinavian farmsteads:

No proven example of a Scandinavian settlement has yet been located in north Cumbria, despite the massive legacy of place-names and the comparatively substantial artifactual evidence for their presence. [. . .] Sites that have many of the characteristics of the well-known excavated Norse settlements, at Jarlshof for example, are now known from aerial photography and field survey work, but the problems of dating such settlements have been amply demonstrated by the excavation of the Ribblehead site, where pre-Viking material provided the only chronological evidence (Higham 1985, 43).

Numerous examples of rectangular building foundations identify the probable sites of shielings on the summer pastures, and some may in turn have become permanent homesteads. [. . .] However, no dates are available for any of the rectangular structures (Higham 1986, 327).

Three upland sites—Ribblehead (Yorks) (King 1978), Simy Folds (Yorks) (Coggins, Fairless, and Batey 1983), and Bryant's Gill (Cumbria) (Dickinson 1985)—are frequently cited as possible Scandinavian farmsteads, but the excavators have generally been careful not to ascribe a racial identification. In the Ribblehead interim

report, Alan King (1978, 25) writes, 'the site still poses one major question—is the farmstead *landnam* Norse Viking or typically Northumbrian Anglo-Saxon. [...] At present it would be unreasonable to answer the question'.

Despite King's caution, the interim report was published in a volume entitled *Viking Age York and the North* (Hall 1978) and featured in the catalogue of a major Vikings exhibition (Roesdahl 1981). Ribblehead has become enshrined in the literature as a Viking farm, even though 'the evidence for this classification is relatively slight' and there is 'a lack of distinctively Scandinavian artefacts' (Edwards 1998, 5). Likewise, Bryant's Gill has also been cited as a Viking rural settlement, largely on the basis of building form and parallels between the spindle whorls found there and examples from Hedeby (formerly Denmark, now in north Germany), regardless of the fact that the presence of whetstones and spindle whorls 'would be probable had the site been occupied at any time from the Bronze Age to the post-medieval period' (Edwards 1998, 5).

Accepting that whilst neither Bryant's Gill nor Ribblehead may be categorically identified as Scandinavian farmsteads, Fiona Philpott (1990, 56) suggests that, nonetheless, Scandinavian farmsteads would have looked very much like them: 'We are unable to determine the cultural identity of the inhabitants of these two settlements. The artefacts which survive are not distinctively Scandinavian but the farmsteads belonging to Viking colonists of north-west England were probably very similar in layout and operation'. Chris Morris (1984, 15) is clearly tempted to go further in discussing the upland farmstead at Simy Folds, despite the lack of artefactual evidence: 'While it is not at all easy to distinguish any characteristically Scandinavian artefacts or building-forms at these sites, nevertheless the dates are suggestive'.

Finally, in a 1995 paper, Coleen Batey (1995, 90) presents a detailed case for a Scandinavian genesis for these structures, drawing detailed parallels between the Cumbrian sites and Norse sites in Scotland. Batey's case deserves considering in some detail. If distinctive Scandinavian traits can be identified in the Danelaw then it holds out the prospect of setting a research agenda for the discovery and excavation of more sites. Three categories of evidence are considered: 1) settlement layout, 2) construction methods and materials, and 3) building types and functions (Batey 1995, 75–89).

Under each category of evidence discussed by Batey are listed the following features:

(1) *Settlement Layout*

- Settlement clusters, each building serving a different function, e.g. Simy Folds, and seen in Scotland at sites such as Jarlshof
- Buildings associated with yards, paved areas, or field boundaries, seen at Simy Folds and Ribblehead, as well as Sandwick and Jarlshof
- Rebuilding on the same site

(2) *Construction Methods and Materials*

- Use of stone
- Walls with internal and external facing stones and rubble interior, seen at Simy Folds, Ribblehead, and in Scotland

- Clay bedding for wall, seen at Freswick Links and Brough of Birsay, and paralleled in the use of a clay bank for a wall to be built upon at Simy Folds; bedrock used to same effect at Ribblehead
- Use of flat slabs to form level, or levelling surfaces, at Freswick, Underhoull, Simy Folds, and Ribblehead
- Use of timber, such as at the Braaid and Simy Folds
- Use of a broken quernstone in the hearth kerb, seen both at Simy Folds and Freswick;

(3) *Building Types and Functions*

- Wall benches, seen at Ribblehead, Simy Folds, Jarlshof, Freswick, and Brough of Birsay
- Presence of a kitchen, at Ribblehead, Simy Folds, and Freswick
- Presence of a smithy, both at Ribblehead and Freswick
- Presence of storehouses, at Simy Folds and Freswick.

Despite these superficial similarities, it could be argued that none of these features is any more unusual than one might expect of any upland farmstead in a marginal area with stone available for building materials. Moreover, one must consider that the dating of the parallels is two or three hundred years adrift. The Scottish Norse evidence mainly belongs to the late Norse period of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries; Ribblehead's *terminus post quem* is in the late-ninth century; Simy Folds has calibrated radiocarbon dates of 750 and 790 and is really too early to reflect Scandinavian presence.

There are similar problems if one looks for evidence of Scandinavian settlement in the lowlands in eastern and southern England. The disputed identification of a structure excavated at Waltham Abbey (Essex) as a 'Viking hall' rests upon the attribution of a Scandinavian character to the building form, combined with an historical association with one Tovi the Dane who held estates at Waltham under Cnut. The archaeological evidence comprised a structure over 15 m in length, represented by a row of aisle posts, trenches for timber sill beams (possibly to support aisle posts and benches along the wall), massive corner post-holes at the west gable end, an internal division and doorway at the west end, and a group of three post-holes on one side of the doorway. 'Some of these features can be paralleled throughout areas of Viking settlement but, considered together, are out of place in areas of purely Saxon influence' (Huggins 1976, 85). P.J. Huggins (1976, 91), dating this building to the early eleventh century, suggests that the relatively narrow construction combined with free-standing aisle posts and the absence of timber wall posts implies that the hall was turf-walled, and invokes parallels at Jarlshof. Although the massive corner posts and sill beams do not have Scandinavian parallels, he suggests (1976, 93) that these are new features added as part of a 'colonial tradition'. James Graham-Campbell (1977, 427) has disputed the Scandinavian attribution of the Waltham Abbey hall, arguing that this building might well be later and that it is, in any case, unlikely to have been turf-walled: 'There need be nothing peculiarly Scandinavian about this structure and, more importantly, if it did have turf walls, then it is not the type of structure that Tovi the Dane is likely to have built'. On balance, the identification of

the Waltham Abbey hall as Viking on the basis of Scandinavian architectural features seems rather doubtful, particularly as the form of the building is so questionable. A better chance is provided where there is a clear and distinctive building plan.

Bow-sided halls are characteristic of tenth-century Jutland villages, such as Vorbasse (Hvass 1985), Ömgård (Nielsen 1980), and Sædding (Stoumann 1980), as well as being found in the Trelleborg-type fortresses (Schmidt 1973). It has been suggested that their occurrence in late Anglo-Saxon England was a result of Scandinavian influence (Rahtz 1976, 88). However, they are known both within and beyond the Danelaw and it is difficult to identify specifically Scandinavian traits. As yet there is no full and conclusive catalogue of bow-sided houses found in England, and the terminology applied in excavation reports is inconsistent. C.F. Tebbutt (1962, 13–16) referred to his discovery at Buckden as ‘boat-shaped’, while Brian Hope Taylor (1962, 17) criticises the hypothetical reference to boats as ‘uneconomical and unnecessary’, preferring the term ‘bow-shaped’. Structures with distinctly curved walls and dated to between the ninth and eleventh centuries have been excavated at Buckden (Cambs) (Tebbutt 1962, 13–16), Catholme (Staffs) (Losco-Bradley and Wheeler 1984, 103–11), Cheddar (Somerset) (Rahtz 1979), Chester (Mason 1985), Durham (Carver 1979), Goltho (Lincs) (Beresford 1987), Hamwic (Southampton, Hamps) (Holdsworth 1976, 35–60), North Elmham (Norfolk) (Wade Martins 1980), St Neots (Cambs) (Addyman 1972), Sulgrave (Northants) (Davison 1968), and Thetford (Norfolk) (Davison 1967).

Several of the English examples correspond to the archetype identified in Denmark. The structures at Cheddar, North Elmham, Goltho, and Sulgrave show clearly symmetrical bow-shaped sides with a tripartite internal division. They also appear side-by-side with rectilinear buildings, but they surpass local contemporaries in terms of their imposing structure: those at Goltho and Sulgrave both measure *c.* 24 m in length, compared with 26.33 m at Trelleborg (Nørlund 1968, 12). It is likely that several of the larger examples were occupied by the social elite; others, such as the smaller examples at Chester, St Neots, and Thetford may have been used by merchants. Most of these structures do fall within the territory later defined as the Danelaw, the exceptions being at Cheddar and Hamwic. The building at Cheddar is somewhat unusual. It is dated to before 930, a time when there were Scandinavian incursions into southern England, although Philip Rahtz (1979, 107) concludes that ‘the Long Hall was not regular enough in its plan to be directly compared with the well-known Viking ‘boat shaped’ buildings at Trelleborg and elsewhere’. The Hamwic building was destroyed by the ninth century but Hamwic was a cosmopolitan trading centre from the seventh century and so may have been open to Scandinavian ideas.

At Goltho, Guy Beresford (1987, 30) prefers a functional explanation for the building form and concludes: ‘Much closer dating would be required to establish whether the manorial complex was founded by a member of the Saxon aristocracy in the 850s or early 860s or by one of similar position of Viking origin’. Indeed, Paul Everson (1988) has argued that the place identified as Goltho was in fact Bullington, and that it should be dated later than proposed by the excavator. More recent studies of the pottery have reinforced a later date, making a tenth-century origin more likely

(Vince 1993, 158–60). In any case, Beresford prefers an Anglo-Saxon origin for four reasons: 1) there is ‘Nothing to suggest that the farmstead had been ravaged by Viking raiders’; 2) the footings of the hall and other buildings are comparable to the Long Hall at Cheddar, which is well outside the area of Viking settlement, rather than to sites in Jutland; 3) the dearth of Scandinavian artefacts in the early levels; and 4) the fact that the place-names Goltho and Bullington are Old English and not Old Norse.

In summary, it is possible that the bow-sided houses were a symbol of Scandinavian power and culture, an assertion of identity, but it is notable that they are not direct copies of Scandinavian archetypes. Bow-sided structures in England are frequently smaller than their Danish counterparts. It is also notable that the English examples do not appear to have contained byres, unlike their Scandinavian counterparts at Sædding (Stoumann 1980, 98) and Vorbasse (Hvass 1983, 213). Thus they were probably not intended as agricultural structures. They may have been associated with the byre-less structures of the Trelleborg-style fortifications, thus being imbued with notions of military power. If the bow-sided house was a Scandinavian cultural trait its infrequency in England is perhaps puzzling. There are no examples from York, for example. Perhaps, like hog-back tombstones, this is another example of the creation of an Anglo-Scandinavian identity, in particular circumstances (Lang 1984; see also Stocker, this volume).

The identification of settlement disruption is similarly problematic. New settlement forms and location are found widely in the ninth and tenth centuries, not just within the Danelaw. Archaeologists and historians working in many parts of England are increasingly likely to date settlement nucleation and the origins of planned villages to the late Anglo-Saxon period, rather than to after the Norman Conquest. Evidence from the Midlands, East Anglia, Wessex, and Yorkshire all points to a major period of settlement reorganization around the tenth century (see, for example, Richards 2000; Saunders 1991; Yorke 1995, 269).

Similarly, one might hesitate to use the presence of Scandinavian-style artefacts to ascribe a Scandinavian identity to a settlement, unless they are associated with other evidence. For Goltho, Beresford is unconvinced by the presence of a bridle bit identical to one from York, itself similar to ninth- and tenth-century Scandinavian examples. At Waltham Abbey, Huggins (1984, 180) has cited the discovery of a Ringerike-style mount in a burial 140 m from the hall building as confirmation of a Viking presence. At Wharram Percy (Yorks), Caroline Paterson (2000) has ascribed the recovery of a Borre-style belt-slide and strap-end from the South Manor site to the presence of a Norwegian settler. In this case, I would agree that there is contributory evidence, such as that from place-names and territorial organization, to support this argument (Richards 2000), but clearly Scandinavian objects are rare finds from rural sites in the Danelaw.

The problem is that in England, Scandinavian culture rarely exists in an undiluted form. Unlike the situation in parts of Scotland or in the Isle of Man, it is the creation of a new identity that we are dealing with here, not the imposition of a Scandinavian one. The question ‘Where are the Scandinavian settlements in the Danelaw?’ is therefore not a sensible one to ask. In the context of this volume I believe that it should be rephrased. To attempt to ascribe race to culture is clearly impossible, as Gordon Childe (1929)

himself identified. We cannot claim that an individual warrior in a grave came from Scandinavia (Halsall, and Evison, this volume), or that the inhabitant of a settlement was Scandinavian. What we *are* able to do is to identify the use of material culture to proclaim a particular identity, and to invent new ones. A backwards look at settlement archaeology of the early Anglo-Saxon period may be instructive here. Most archaeologists now agree that the excavated settlements with their combination of Germanic *Grubenhäuser* and native post-built halls represent a cultural mixing and that the thousands of pagan graves reflect the adoption of an Anglo-Saxon ethnicity (cf. Trafford, this volume). Similarly, I would suggest that we may be able to identify ethnicity in the Viking Age. We should therefore use our terms carefully. To claim a site as a Viking or Scandinavian settlement may be misleading; for the Danelaw the use of the term 'Anglo-Scandinavian' may be more appropriate, implying as it does the invention of a new identity arising from cultures in contact.

To conclude and illustrate with a case-study, I would like to propose a partially excavated farmstead at Cottam (Yorks) (Richards 1999), as an example of an Anglo-Scandinavian settlement in the Yorkshire Wolds. The existence of occupation of the eighth to tenth centuries near Burrow House Farm, Cottam, came to light as a result of the recovery, over many years, of large numbers of Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian artefacts by metal-detector users. From 1987–89, some two hundred man-hours of searching yielded over sixty pieces of eighth- and ninth-century date from a field to the west of the farm. The Anglo-Scandinavian finds include eight lead weights, a Jelling-style brooch, a Borre-style buckle, and two so-called Norse bells.

If the distribution of the metal-detector finds is plotted there appear to be two foci. The southern concentration coincides with a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, whilst there is a second focus to the north which is less clearly associated with other features. Magnetometer survey, however, has revealed that there are further ditched enclosures in this area, although their shallow depth means that they have little effect on crop growth (fig. 28). If the position of datable metal objects is plotted, it suggests that there is a difference in date between the two clusters, with most late eighth-century finds towards the south, and late ninth- and tenth-century finds in the northern cluster. Field walking has confirmed the picture derived from the distribution of metal-detector finds. This shows that there is a general background distribution of Roman potsherds across the field, whereas Anglo-Saxon shards are concentrated towards the east. The Torksey ware shards, which are not current before the tenth century, are particularly focused towards the north-east, which is where the tenth century metal finds were clustered. This localized shift has been further confirmed by excavation. In 1993 two trenches dug across the southern enclosure revealed post-hole buildings and settlement debris of the eighth and early ninth centuries. To the east of one of the buildings was a circular pit, c. 1.5 m in diameter, towards the middle of which was an adult female skull. The fill of the pit also contained a Wessex silver penny of Æthelberht, dated 858–62, an Anglo-Saxon dress tag, and two decorated comb fragments. The contents of the pit were sieved and yielded skeletons of frogs and water voles, which must have stumbled into it whilst it lay open. By this stage, therefore, it is proposed that this area of the site had been

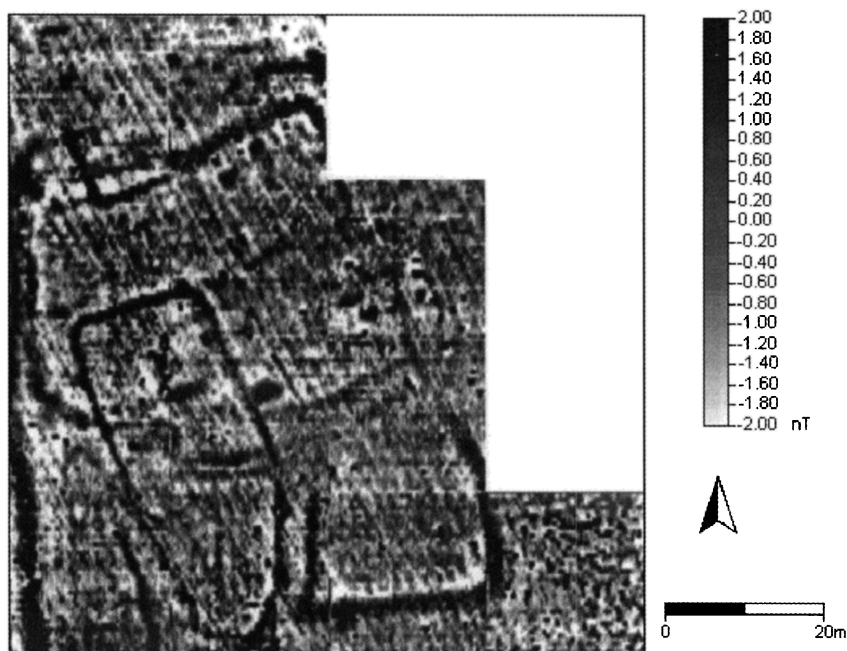


Fig. 28. Cottam, East Yorkshire. Anglo-Scandinavian settlement as revealed in magnetometer plot

abandoned. The settlement had been relocated to the north-east where a third trench dug in 1995 revealed a farmstead of the Viking Age. Although the crop marks had indicated fewer settlement traces in this area, magnetometer survey revealed a clear settlement plan with a number of regularly planned sub-rectangular enclosures (fig. 28). Excavation confirmed the existence of tenth-century settlement, although truncation made it difficult to do more than identify areas of clusters of post-holes, particularly to the north of the excavated area, at the head of a ditched trackway. Given that structures could also have rested upon post-pads or sill-beams, the lack of coherent building plans is disappointing but should not be surprising. Excavation also recovered evidence for a gateway structure which is of more interest. The majority of the boundaries of the tenth-century farmstead were ephemeral features, represented by shallow ditches which we must assume held wooden fences. Whilst they may have suffered from some plough damage it is extremely unlikely that there could have been differential truncation to the extent that they were ever substantial features. The entrance way was a very different affair, comprising a massive external ditch, an internal rubble bank, itself possibly topped by a timber palisade, and a timber superstructure represented by massive post-holes at either side of the gate. The gate faced south, towards the recently abandoned Anglian farmstead, and the trackway leading to the south. It is difficult to interpret it as a defensive structure as any potential attackers could very easily have out-flanked it and



Fig. 29. Cottam, East Yorkshire. Two Anglo-Scandinavian bells decorated with ring-and-dot ornament

stepped over the flimsy ditch and fence to either side of the farmstead. Rather it has to be seen as a status symbol, with a major, possibly arched and decorated, timber superstructure which would have been clearly visible to those coming up the valley or using the trackway.

The existence of a gatehouse may have had a special significance for contemporary visitors to the site. In a discussion of lordly residences in England before the Norman Conquest, Ann Williams (1992, 225) cites a passage in an eleventh-century text written by Archbishop Wulfstan II of York (1002–23), called *Gethynctho* (EHD, no. 52), in which he describes how a *ceorl* may thrive to thegnhood: ‘And if a *ceorl* prospered so that he had fully five hides of his own land (*agenes landes*), [church and kitchen], bell [house] and *burh-geat*, seat and special office in the king’s hall, then was he thenceforward entitled to the rank of a thegn’. Williams (1992, 227) suggests that the use of the word *burh-geat* implies that the gate-house was the most prominent feature of the defences, and cites a number of sources to suggest that the manorial enclosures may have been hedged, fenced, or ditched.

In addition to the new settlement form, new artefact types are also introduced at Cottam, in a mixed Anglian and Scandinavian style. There are a few objects, including the Jelling-style brooch and the Borre-style buckle, in a distinctive Scandinavian style. The Norse bells are particularly interesting (fig. 29). As well as the two published examples from Cottam (Haldenby 1990; 1994), a third has recently been found from the site of the ploughed-out, deserted medieval village at Cowlam (David Haldenby and David Hirst pers. comm.). Their function is unknown although they could have been used as decorative horse harness, or worn as charms, although no religious significance is known. Such miniature bells are not found in Scandinavia but they have been found exclusively in the Scandinavian colonies overseas. Batey (1988) has discussed the form

with respect to the recovery of a similar bell with ring-and-dot ornament, from the Scottish site at Freswick Links. She also records (1988) that examples of small copper alloy bells are known from the Isle of Man, with one from Meols, and that there are also three from Iceland (Gudrun Sveinbjarnardottir pers. comm.). Several are now known from the Danelaw, including one from Lincoln (Batey 1988, 214), a second from a context of *c.* 975 from 16–22 Coppergate, York (Richard Hall pers. comm.), and a third from Goltho in a context dated *c.* 950–75 (Beresford 1987, 176). A further three are known as metal-detector finds from Lincolnshire (Kevin Leahy and Caroline Paterson pers. comm.), and there have been two recent metal-detector finds from Norfolk, from Fincham and Cranwich (Helen Geake pers. comm.). Their dating, by analogy with other finds, must fall within the tenth century. Like hogback tombstones, it may be appropriate to regard them as ‘colonial monuments’ (Lang 1984), created specifically to express Scandinavian ethnicity in an overseas context.

This need not mean that the inhabitants of the tenth-century farmstead were Viking settlers who had dispossessed their Anglian predecessors. Indeed, the impression is one of localized settlement shift rather than discontinuity. There is absolutely no evidence for a violent takeover; the single weather-worn skull minus its lower jaw is much better seen as the victim of indigenous execution practices (Reynolds 1999, 105; Richards forthcoming, b). On the other hand, the ostentation of the new farmstead with its ranch-style entrance is perhaps suggestive of the ‘nouveau-riche’ farmers of the Wolds, or of old farmers wanting to appear to be fashionable.

In conclusion, at Cottam there are variants of each of the three traits used to identify intrusive settlement in Scandinavian colonies elsewhere in the British Isles. Firstly, it is possible to define new settlement forms, not in terms of Scandinavian-style buildings, but remote sensing allows the identification of a new form of settlement enclosure, not previously observed. Secondly, there is clear evidence for settlement disruption, with the abandonment of the Anglian enclosure and the establishment of a new farmstead to the north, itself only occupied for a single generation. Thirdly, there is the introduction, not simply of Scandinavian-style artefacts, but of a newly invented Anglo-Scandinavian colonial artefact type: the miniature decorative copper alloy bells.

None of these is clearly ‘Scandinavian’ or ‘Viking’; one cannot identify Scandinavian settlement. On the other hand all of them may be defined as Anglo-Scandinavian, representing a new ethnicity created through the interaction of cultures in contact (see also Innes, this volume). In summary, I would suggest that in trying to identify Anglo-Scandinavian settlements we must be open to the presence of new cultural and artefactual forms, used to negotiate new social, economic, and political relations.

ABBREVIATIONS

EHD *English Historical Documents I, c. 500–1042*, Whitelock, D. trans. and ed., 2nd edn, 1979, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode

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Anglo-Scandinavian Attitudes: Archaeological Ambiguities in Late Ninth- to Mid-Eleventh-Century York

R.A. HALL

York is the English city most thoroughly identified with Vikings. Under the (albeit interrupted) rule of a series of kings of Scandinavian descent, it was the focus of the longest-lasting resistance to the expanding power of the kings of Wessex (Rollason 1998; forthcoming); it is the setting for supposedly tenth-century episodes within the thirteenth-century Icelandic *Egil's Saga*; and to this day it retains street-names heavily influenced by Old Norse (Fellows-Jensen forthcoming). The aim of this chapter, however, is to probe the assumptions and interpretations which underlie this association of ancient people and place.

It starts by tracing how an appreciation of the Vikings' impact on York has evolved, and in particular by calibrating changing terminology against the national and local background of historical interpretations and archaeological discoveries. It goes on to examine various categories of archaeological evidence from York which have formerly been interpreted as 'Viking', and indicates how these attributions are often questionable. Recognizing the ambiguities and uncertainties inherent in these parts of the data should in time allow a more focussed discussion of the meaning of the undoubted Scandinavian items which are found in ninth- to eleventh-century York.

Putting the 'Viking' into 'Viking Age York'

Chroniclers and other contemporary writers were in no doubt that the 'great heathen army' which attacked and captured York in 866, and in part shared out the land of the Northumbrians in 876, was of Danish origin. These sources informed such Anglo-Norman authors as William of Malmesbury who, writing c. 1125 about York, mentioned

'the Danish barbarians', and in turn such references influenced antiquaries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (e.g. Camden 1607, 574). York's own most influential and most plagiarized early historian, Drake (1736, 75f.) also wrote of 'the Danes', and so implanted this element of terminology firmly into the local scholarly vocabulary. Subsequently, the need to distinguish the deeds of the Danes of York from those of other Scandinavian rulers in Britain led to the introduction of terms such as 'the Northumbrian-Danes' (Hargrove 1818, 56).

Contemporary sources also prompted a recognition by historians of the collaborative contribution to the new regime made by at least some native Northumbrians such as Wulfhere, Archbishop of York (854–92/900). Modern terminological account had to be taken of this, and of the regal see-sawing in which kings of Wessex including Æthelstan (924–39), Edmund (939–46), and Eadred (946–55) all took control of York for some (but only some) of their respective reigns, without finally seeing off the foreign-led threat. Thus, hybrid descriptions such as 'Anglo-Danish' were conceived and used locally of the period and its rulers (e.g. Auden 1907a, 235).

This descriptive terminology, initially rooted in a perception of the geographical/national/ethnic identity of successful invaders, was transferred to distinguish the independent political entity centred on York which existed for most of the period 866–954 (or thereabouts: cf. Sawyer 1995; Woolf 1998). Phrases such as 'The Danish Kingdom of York' were coined (cf. Collingwood 1908, 119ff) and, by extension, the ill-defined and fluctuating geographical area which the Danes settled or ruled came to be described in similar terms.

The York antiquarian Sir Thomas Widdrington, who died in 1664, had written of 'the lamentable time of the Danes' (Caine 1897, 42), thus initiating locally a chronological dimension to the terminology. This usage in turn was extended to encompass contemporary products originating in and thought to be characteristic of the time and place. Drake (1736, civ) had once again set an example when he published an illustration entitled 'Saxon and Danish coins struck at York'. This eventually allowed the introduction of concepts such as 'Anglo-Danish taste', which, for example, was discussed with relation to stone-carving in W.G. Collingwood's (1909) 'Anglian and Anglo-Danish sculpture from York'.

Other authors, mindful that there is linguistic and historical evidence for Norwegian participation in events at York, but not willing to concur with those who distinguish a separate Norse historical phase, have broadened the hybrid to 'Anglo-Scandinavian' (e.g. Stenton 1927). This term is used to describe both a chronological era and characteristic elements of its material culture. In this case the era in question is defined as c. 866–c. 1069, that is from the initial capture of York by the 'great army' to the time when William the Conqueror strengthened his military grip on the city and in so doing significantly altered aspects of its topography (Hall 1996, 39f). This is an archaeologically convenient division, which minimizes the difficulties of placing archaeological evidence, often not datable to within several decades, on one side or the other of politically defined divides that are still of questionable and uncertain relevance to some aspects of the material culture. It is also a 'neutral' terminology which, in the traditions

of 'Romano-British' and 'Anglo-Saxon', can be used to designate the period, the peoples, and the cultural influences of an era.

'Anglo-Scandinavian' implies a mutual coalescing of native English and native Scandinavian cultural traits into a hybrid entity. In one sense, however, it is a relatively crude term, embracing a series of changes which took place over many years on all sides of an evolving social, political, and ethnic spectrum. There was, of course, no single 'Anglo-Scandinavian' trajectory of hybridization, but diverse and complex responses by both individuals and groups forming actuality behind the archaeological record.

In contrast to 'Dane', the word 'Viking' did not survive in continuous use from the beginning to the end of the second millennium. The Old English word *wicing*, used only five times in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Fell 1986, 303f), survived into early Middle English and medieval Latin, but not into early modern English (Fell 1987, 112). Similarly, the Old Norse word *vikingr* had to be reintroduced into Scandinavian languages in the seventeenth century, and it was not borrowed into English until as late as 1807 (Fell 1987, 117). As the nineteenth century progressed 'Viking' became a commonplace term, used to describe the Scandinavian and Icelandic mythology, literature, and history which excited such interest in Victorian Britain (cf. Wawn 1994). It was used by the Danish scholar J.J.A. Worsaae in references to the ninth-century raids and settlement of both England in general and York in particular in his influential *An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland and Ireland*, published in 1852. Subsequently, the phrase 'The Viking Age' was popularized as the title of P.B. Du Chaillu's well-known book of 1889, which quoted extensively from saga sources including ones referring to York. 'Viking' was not, however, employed in contemporary descriptions of objects dug up in York during the late nineteenth century, which were at last being recognized as dating approximately to the mid-ninth to mid-eleventh century; they were referred to locally as 'Scandinavian Curiosities' emanating from 'Danish workshops' (Raine 1891, 216).

Perhaps the earliest use of 'Viking' in a discussion of pre-Norman York is by Platnauer (1906), but 'Danes' remained the norm until the publication of a corpus of material entitled 'Late Saxon, Viking and Early Medieval Finds from York' (Waterman 1959). Thenceforth, 'Viking', 'Viking Age', 'The Viking Kingdom of York', etc. have been added promiscuously to the terminology (e.g. Cramp 1967; Hall 1976; Roskams 1996, 278). It appears that sometimes their use represents an effort to avoid constant repetition of other words and phrases such as those noted earlier. They also represent a convenient short-hand which glosses over what would otherwise require relatively lengthy explanation. Finally, 'Vikings' and 'Viking Age' have been adopted by educationalists wishing to engage the attention of a public with no background knowledge whatsoever of the early medieval period and its unfamiliar academic terminology; most people have, however, heard of the Vikings, albeit often with romantic and/or preposterous connotations, and seem prepared to engage further with an apparently familiar concept. Keynes's (1999, 460) summation of 'Vikings' as 'a term of convenience applied indiscriminately by modern scholarship' is certainly supported by its use *vis-à-vis* York.

Some of the local usage of 'Viking' has followed one of the more particular national usages which has equated 'viking' with 'pirate', or 'sea-borne raider'. By these criteria York never had a 'Viking' phase to its existence, for there is no record that it was a target for the hit and run raiders active during the end of the eighth and the early-mid-ninth centuries. If we allow that the 'great heathen army' was a 'Viking' army, then perhaps York had a Viking phase from its capture in 866 until the army's settlement in Northumbria in 876. With historical hindsight, other significant events which could mark the end of 'Viking' York include the early tenth-century defeat at the Battle of Tettenhall (Staffs); the enthronement of Ragnald in 919; the submission to Æthelstan in 927; or the final expulsion in 952/4 of the Norwegian prince Erik Bloodaxe, the last king of an independent Northumbria. Many have considered that Erik's demise marked the end of an era; for Binns (1963) it brought to a close *The Viking Century in East Yorkshire*, while York's twentieth-century antiquarian, George Benson, drew a distinction between 'Jorvik or Danish York 867–954' and 'Eoforwic or Anglo-Danish York 955–1066' (Benson 1911, 45, 54).

This eclectic historiographical review has demonstrated that the terminology used in discussions of mid-ninth to mid-eleventh century York has followed national trends, with *arriviste* archaeologists adopting an established vocabulary which largely evolved within an antiquarian milieu or in other academic disciplines. Until recently, however, the absence of excavated data that is sufficiently closely dated has thwarted any desire to define the characteristics of contemporary material culture and to discuss it within the documented political context of the era.

York's Topographical Evolution: A Scandinavian Dimension?

In the summary survey of some of the archaeological evidence from York for Scandinavian influence or contacts which follows, large-scale and general concepts will be dealt with before smaller-scale and particular details. Relevant but non-archaeological topics such as the exculpatory legend of Ragnarr Lothbroc, or the legacy of Old Norse influence in the street names of York, are omitted.

First, York's topographic framework has been compared with Scandinavian examples. Radley (1971, 39) identified a 'Danish' defensive rampart which ran from the River Ouse to the River Foss, but which left the river fronts themselves unwallled. He also noted the similarity of this configuration to the layout of contemporary well-documented trading sites at Birka in Sweden and at Hedeby, now in Germany but under Danish control in the Viking Age. These sites, unencumbered by later occupation, have been investigated since at least the nineteenth century; when Radley was writing, relatively little urban archaeology had been undertaken in England, and they were among the obvious places to look for comparanda. The likely date for their defensive circuits, the later tenth century, was not mentioned. Today, places like Chester provide closer analogies for how York developed from Roman origins during the ninth to

eleventh centuries; the temptation is to ignore further distant sites. Yet the reports of Ottar and Wulfstan, late ninth-century voyagers who reached the court of King Alfred and who had both visited Hedeby, as well as other market places (Lund 1984), should serve as a reminder that Scandinavian manufacturing and trading centres like these are likely to have been within the collective experience of the Scandinavians who invaded and settled England.

York's single quite closely dated example of the establishment of enduring units of land ownership or land use is the tenement plot boundaries excavated at 16–22 Coppergate. These boundaries were laid out within the period *c.* 890–*c.* 930, while Scandinavian rulers were in control of York. To what extent royal authority was a catalyst in this topographical evolution is, however, debatable. Ownership of *blocks* of land may have been a royal dispensation in York, as it was in English towns which were under English control at this time, but their parcelling up into plots may have been the prerogative of lesser men, driven by economic rather than political considerations. In either case, there is nothing uniquely Scandinavian in this tendril or commercial fragmentation of the urban landscape.

Only four tenements from the two thousand or so which constituted York in 1066 have been excavated in anything approaching their entirety; in all, approximately 0.025% of that city has been revealed. The sample of complete or comprehensible building plans yet known is therefore a minuscule proportion of the buildings erected in the city *c.* 866–1069. Attempts to relate them to whatever building traditions were in common use in York in the immediately preceding centuries are hampered by an even smaller excavated sample: the archaeological imprint of only three reasonably intact buildings found at 46–54 Fishergate provide an indication of the local Anglo-Saxon traditions (Kemp 1996). Nonetheless, meagre though the available evidence is, it does not reveal any characteristics in the late-ninth to mid-eleventh century buildings that could be attributed to Scandinavian influences. Rather their size, shape, and structural method (insofar as it can be reconstructed) can all be paralleled in other contemporary English towns. In practical terms there were no radical structural differences between the York buildings and those found in parts of Viking Age Scandinavia, but there is no real sign that the Scandinavian settlers of Northumbria in 876 introduced anything specifically Scandinavian to the repertoire of York's builders.

York and Scandinavia: Commercial Linkage?

Raw materials and finished artefacts originating in Scandinavia undisputedly were brought to late ninth- to mid-eleventh-century York. While some may have been introduced as individuals' personal possessions, others are certainly the result of commercial activities, either directly or *via* middlemen. A fragmentary Hedeby *penning* demonstrates the possibility of direct contact with a major Scandinavian mercantile centre (Pirie 1986, 55); possible middlemen are represented by the documentary evidence for Frisians in York *c.* 800, and by a probably Frisian textile which has been recovered in ninth- to eleventh-century York (Walton 1989, 324–5, 341).

Among the items found in York which were made from raw materials that definitely originated in Scandinavia are honestones fashioned from both phyllite and Norwegian ragstone schist (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2484f). They have not been recovered in Anglian contexts; their importation seems to have commenced in the late-ninth century. Stone vessels of steatite and talc schist, both commonly referred to as soapstone, are also a novelty at York when found in late ninth- and tenth-century deposits. The soapstone's origin cannot be pinpointed with certainty; the only source within the British Isles is in Shetland, itself an area of contemporary Scandinavian settlement, but Scandinavian outcrops were also worked at this period (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2541f; another possible link with Shetland is noted below).

In contrast, amber is not a novelty in late ninth-century Yorkshire—beads made from amber are not uncommon within early (fifth- to seventh-century) Anglian graves, and occasional instances of its use are known in Northumbria in the Middle Saxon period (c. 650–850), both for beads and, more unusually, as a jeweller's inlay (Hall, Paterson, and Mortimer 1999). The mechanisms which brought this amber to Northumbria in the fifth to ninth centuries are not clearly established. Some of it may have been washed up on the Northumbrian coast; some may have been imported from the Baltic, where it occurs plentifully. Only a small quantity of amber has been recovered in seventh- to mid-ninth-century Northumbria, however, and in comparison with this there is a relative abundance in late ninth- to eleventh-century York. The workshop debris uncovered at Clifford Street, York, in 1884, and dateable to this broad era both typologically and by association with a suite of contemporary objects, is unparalleled in Britain (Waterman 1959; Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2500f). Together with the smaller quantity of similar but more closely dated material from 16–22 Coppergate, and occasional discoveries elsewhere in the city, this represents a significant increase in use at a time when links with Scandinavia were more intense than previously.

On the basis of palaeoenvironmental evidence from 16–22 Coppergate, it is probable that considerable quantities of Clubmoss (*Diphysium complanatum*) were imported from Scandinavia (Kenward and Hall 1995, 772); its use was presumably as a mordant for dyeing the textiles produced on the site (Rogers 1997, 1766f). Other textiles, however, have characteristics which indicate that they originated in Scandinavia. One fragment of matted wool twill (Rogers 1997, 1303) has been identified as an example of the Scandinavian fabric *wadmal* (Walton 1989, 336–41), and a woollen sock from tenth-century levels was made in the Scandinavian technique of *nålebinding* and is unique in England (Walton 1989, 341–5).

Walrus ivory, used to make gaming pieces, originates in northern Scandinavia or the Scandinavian Atlantic settlements (Roesdahl 1998). This latter possibility serves to introduce another segment of York's archaeological record which demonstrates contacts with the Scandinavian world. This comprises the items of foreign but not Scandinavian origin which are present in the city probably as a result of Scandinavian-inspired mechanisms. Most obvious, perhaps, is a Kufic *dirham*, minted at Samarkand in 903–7/8. This is closely comparable with coins from two hoards found near York, at Bossall/Flaxton and at Goldsborough. Both of these mixed hoards, which contain

hacksilver as well as coins, represent a Scandinavian rather than an English approach to economics (Blackburn forthcoming), and the *dirhams* in them have been shown to have reached western Europe via Russia and Scandinavia. Similarly, the Carolingian coin of Charles the Bald found at 16–22 Coppergate (Pirie 1986, 55) may be compared with others from Scandinavian hoards in the British Isles (Blackburn forthcoming), and could well be bullion originally obtained in Viking raiding.

Both a series of silks from Byzantium (Walton 1989, 360–82) and a cowrie from the Red Sea (Kenward and Hall 1995, 781) may have followed the same, roundabout northerly route to York as the *dirhams*, and may thus constitute another manifestation of Scandinavian contacts, although other, more southerly routes across southern and western Europe are also possible. Finally in this summary of foreign material, there are cloak/garment fasteners of both Irish and Pictish types (ringed pins and a penannular brooch fragment) (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2570, 2580–2). It is again possible to interpret these as a by-product of a Scandinavian network of contacts, around the Irish Sea and also incorporating the Northern Isles, which extended to York. This Irish Sea contact is also perhaps displayed in the adoption of the ring-headed cross in Northumbria in the tenth century; an example comes from St Mary, Castlegate, York (Wenham, Hall, Briden, and Stocker 1987, 156–8; see also Thomas, this volume). Pre-Viking Northumbrian crosses were free-armed, although the Irish of Ireland and Scotland customarily employed the ring-headed form; the Scandinavian takeover may have diminished regional exclusivity and opened Northumbria to a wider range of influences than was acceptable before.

Artefact Typologies: A Common Link?

Typological study of artefacts has long been a key element in definitions of Anglo-Scandinavian York. Initially, in 1884, it was items of bone, glass, jet, and amber found in Clifford Street which were singled out as being ‘Danish Antiquities’, although whether the phrase had chronological, geological, or cultural connotations is unclear, and the basis for this opinion is unknown (YPS 1884, 10). By 1891 the distinguished Danish archaeologist Sophus Müller, Worsaae’s successor as Director of the National Museum (formerly the Old Nordic Museum), had examined the relics and pronounced them to be Scandinavian. Which items he saw and whether he handled photographs, drawings, or the objects themselves is not made clear, but it was only glass linen smoothers, bone skates, and iron axe-heads from amongst a wide variety of other objects which were identified specifically and explicitly as Scandinavian types (Raine 1891, 218–20). In 1907 it was bone (*recte* ‘antler’) combs which were being described as ‘of “Danish” pattern’ (Auden 1907b, 54). An openwork scabbard chape found in 1906 could, however, be linked more precisely with comparanda from Denmark and Norway and attributed by Müller, on the basis of photographs, to either Danish or Norwegian workmanship (Benson 1906, 74; Auden 1907a, 235; 1909, 170).

Waterman’s (1959) survey eclectically called upon the range of parallels available, many of them from Scandinavia, to suggest a quite marked degree of comparability with

Scandinavian artefacts. Forty years on, and with a much fuller appreciation of ninth- to eleventh-century English, British, and European material as a result of urban and other excavations in the intervening period, the corpus of artefacts from contemporary York appears to share the majority of its characteristics with those from other towns across England. Certainly, some classes of objects, combs for instance, include types which are very similar or even, in some cases, identical in form to examples from Dublin, Lund, Ribe, Hedeby, Birka, and other sites throughout the Scandinavian world. Their technological aspects are also shared with examples from central and northern Europe: 'stylistically they are anchored in the Scandinavian world' (MacGregor, Mainman, and Rogers 1999, 1939). Other artefacts from York which have been identified as reflecting Scandinavian traits include piriform gaming pieces made of walrus ivory, noted above, and zoomorphic pins with terminals which are paralleled at Jarlslof, Shetland (MacGregor, Mainman, and Rogers 1999, 1981–2).

Artistic Association? The Evidence of Style Analysis

Motif-pieces—fragments of bone upon which craftsmen practised their designs—show the adoption by York's craftsmen of both the English Trewiddle style of animal ornament and Scandinavian styles including elements of Borre-style ring chain and what has been described by Tweddle (MacGregor, Mainman, and Rogers 1999, 1963) as Jelling-style animal ornament with links to both Dublin and the Isle of Man, two contemporary centres of Scandinavian power and influence. The degree to which Scandinavian traits can be detected through the diagnosis of artistic parameters has long been accepted as an index of 'Viking' power and influence. Interpretation, however, is dependant upon assurance that motifs of Scandinavian and English origin can be distinguished and dated, and their significance defined within the processes of the evolution of Anglo-Scandinavian style (Thomas, and Sidebottom, this volume). Naturally, stylistic analysis is not definitive and static, but evolves in the light of new discoveries and discussions—for example, a decorated spear socket from York has been variously associated with the Jelling, Ringerike, and Urnes styles of ninth- to eleventh-century Scandinavian art (Lang 1981, 159–60). An additional hazard is that only a limited range of artists' media normally survive, including bone and antler, metalwork, and stone sculpture; there is very little carved wood or decorated leatherwork to inform comparison.

One object from York may demonstrate Scandinavian influences in both its form and its decoration, but epitomizes the archaeological ambiguities confronting the analyst. Fragments comprising most of one side of a fired clay bivalve mould for a three-lobed ornament were found at 9 Blake Street; their date of deposition within the tenth to eleventh centuries is not precise, but the associated evidence suggests the early eleventh century as the most likely time (Hall 1997, 363). Trefoil brooches are a well-known component of Scandinavian female dress jewellery; metal detecting has increased their number in England considerably, although they are still not common (Thomas, this volume). The identification of this item as the mould for a brooch is not

certain, for some trilobed objects of probable insular pedigree had other uses, as strap distributors (Paterson 1997); nonetheless, the object made in this mould was probably a brooch. The motifs decorating it have been identified as animal masks, together with backward-looking birds, winged bipeds, or foliate motifs (Graham-Campbell 1980, 128; Roesdahl 1981, 118; Hall 1997, 363). Broadly similar face masks appear on other pieces of jewellery found in York, notably on two lead-alloy openwork badges (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2478), and have been related to the Scandinavian Borre style; the winged creatures have been compared to others which appear on Anglo-Scandinavian funerary sculpture at York Minster, and their English ancestry has also been noted. Another interpretation, however, sees the *en face* animal heads as typical of the Anglo-Saxon Winchester style, and characterizes the mould as reflecting the application of a native art style to a Scandinavian trefoil-shaped artefact (Paterson 1997, 655).

In a comparably ambiguous vein, but in relation to another medium, a recent authoritative assessment of York's pre-conquest sculpture discussed the substantial assemblage excavated below York Minster (Lang 1995). On various monuments it identified 'colonial Viking ornament', pure Viking elements, a suggestion of Scandinavian taste in certain decorative touches, and one or two pieces with an iconography which indicates a Scandinavian presence. It also noted, however, that while:

The profile ribbon animals are temptingly Scandinavian in appearance and conform to many definitions of the Jelling style. [...] It could be argued that the York Minster slabs' zoomorphic ornament is entirely insular and, moreover, eclectic and revivalist [...] the notion of Scandinavian impact or purity of Viking stylistic evolution [should be] challenged (Lang 1995, 441–2).

It concluded that in the early tenth century 'There is undoubtedly a strong Scandinavian strain in some of the decoration and iconography, but the importance of the Minster school lies in its preservation of the Anglian tradition, in design and technique' (Lang 1995, 443).

Designer Labels? Political Affiliation and Archaeological Ambiguity

In attempting an overall interpretation of the artistic evidence, it may be significant to note that documentary sources suggest that factionalism permeated the highest levels of society in mid-ninth to mid-eleventh-century Yorkshire. The main contenders at the beginning of the era were the Northumbrians who in 866 were themselves split into rival camps, and Halfdan's section of the 'great heathen army'. Soon the archbishops re-asserted their role as key supporters of royal authority, and the earls of Bamburgh strengthened their position north of the Tyne; much speculation could be devoted to the rivalries and alliances of these two power blocks and a third, the community of St Cuthbert, which was reportedly instrumental in the rise to power of King Guthfrith of

York c. 883. These three institutions sought to endure and prosper in a political maelstrom with, at times, a rapid turnover of kings in York. In the first half of the tenth century there were successive interlopers including the Wessex renegade Æthelwold, Ragnald and his Dublin associates, Æthelstan and successive kings of Wessex, and Erik Bloodaxe of Norway. Each of these, as well as York-based kings and leaders, required and must have courted support, but did not establish unchallenged supremacy (Rollason 1998; and forthcoming).

It could also be claimed that there was a surprisingly strong continuing affiliation with Scandinavia. Although the first generation of leaders and settlers in the 860s–70s came, it is generally assumed, direct from Scandinavia rather than from immigrant communities already established in Ireland or Scotland, there is no documentary evidence for further priming of the political leadership with native Scandinavians until Erik Bloodaxe's appearance(s) in the late 930s–50s (Woolf 1998), and after his time there was no further direct Scandinavian rule. Yet well over a century after the Scandinavian arrival there were still those who favoured Swein and Cnut over the descendants of King Alfred (Kapelle 1979, 14–15; Morris 1992, 26). This, however, could be interpreted as a manifestation of an anti-Wessex/Northumbrian separatist reaction rather than as a directly pro-Scandinavian movement (Innes, this volume).

In theory, all this factionalism might have engendered a political climate in which different allegiances adopted distinctive styles of appearance to advertise and promote their own identity. Within this paradigm, the occurrence of 'English' motifs, exemplified by the Trewiddle-style animal ornament which decorates a silver finger ring (Mainman and Rogers 2000, 2585–6), or the bone motif piece noted above (MacGregor, Mainman, and Rogers 1999, 1960–1), represents not just a continuation of pre-Viking styles among an artistically conservative group of craftsmen in Anglo-Scandinavian York (Tweddle, Moulden, and Logan 1999, 259), but a deliberate statement of 'Englishness' which would be appropriate, for example, for supporters of the kings of Wessex (cf. Sidebottom, this volume). Conversely, Irish or Irish-style objects, such as the ringed pins found in some quantity, could be interpreted as a proclamation of support for the Dublin dynasty. The majority of items, however, belong typologically to a common north-west European tradition, and when they have decorative embellishment it is often either a hybrid mixture of motifs, or a rendition which, by chance or subtle design, reflected both Scandinavian and English traditions. Indeed, in the volatile political climate of late ninth- to eleventh-century *Jorvik*, compromise may have been a common underlying concern; expressing allegiances too robustly may have been unwise. Furthermore, not only the uncertain outcome of the complex political situation, but also an apparently innate affinity with ambiguity, may have influenced the craftsmen of *Jorvik* (cf. Hawkes 1997, 333–4; Webster 1999, 227).

Whatever the underlying propagandist or commercial processes which initiated new, mass production in workshops in York, their output had the potential to be hugely influential, dispersing relatively cheap copies of aristocratic fashion to an unprecedented extent. The clarity of any intentional political message was, however, diminished by the debasement of motifs apparent on at least some of the products. Nevertheless, an idea

of how widely styles could be dispersed is provided by the group of nine near identical strap-ends, decorated with Trewiddle-style animal ornament, with find-spots widely distributed throughout Yorkshire, and with at least one outlier in Northumbria; one example was found in York, and it is suggested that York may have been their place of manufacture (Bailey 1993, 90). Such products of ninth- and tenth-century craftsmen in York helped to redefine Northumbrian, or at least Deiran, identity.

Scandinavian influences on this identity are likely to have varied through time, in relation to the closeness of political, social, and economic contacts with mainland Scandinavia, and in accordance with how the Anglo-Scandinavians manipulated their Scandinavian cultural inheritance. Without excavation of royal palaces or (so far as we know) royal burials, other first-rank ritual structures such as the contemporary cathedral, or regal assemblages, there is no direct evidence, apart from the coins which they issued, for the extent to which York's Anglo-Scandinavian rulers endeavoured to define their identity. Artefacts which might give some insights into aristocratic tendencies do survive, but such is the stylistic ambiguity of the sculpture which they patronized and so crude the debased craftsmanship of the mass-produced jewellery which (presumably) imitated their fashions, that conclusions are difficult to draw. Even if they were possible, an archaeological calibration of the results into an overall chronological scale, in the hope of determining broad cultural traits, would be impossible, given the relative imprecision of much archaeological dating. Changing attitudes and requirements can, however, be identified—for example, in the breaking up and re-use of tenth-century decorated grave-markers in the cathedral cemetery. Meanwhile, however, imported raw materials and finished goods, originating either within Scandinavia or along the routes frequented by Scandinavian merchants, indicate the extent of York's commercial and other links across the Irish Sea, up the North Sea and into the Baltic, across the English Channel, and, perhaps, out into the North Atlantic. While some of this assemblage may represent a continuation of pre-Viking exchanges, parts of it seem to indicate a new strength of contact which reflects the political situation in York.

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Index

- Aachen (Germany) 51
 Ælfgar, earl 68
 Ælfgar, church patron 167
 Ælfric, homilist 94–5
 Ælfric Puttoc, Archbishop of York 161
 Ælle, Northumbrian king 11, 156
 Ælstan, landholder 112
 Æthelberht, King of Wessex 303
 Æthelflaed, ruler of Mercia 114, 119, 192
 Æthelred, King of England 44, 46, 48, 66, 72–7, 124–5, 166
 Æthelric of Bocking, thegn 83
 Æthelryth, St 163–4
 Æthelstan Mannesone, landholder 162
 Æthelstan, priest 163
 Æthelweard, chronicler 93–5, 98, 113
 Æthelwine, ealdorman 163–4, 167
 Æthelwold, Bishop of *Dummoc* 158
 Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester 82, 163–5, 170
 Æthelwold, nephew of King Alfred 112, 320
 Æthelwulf, Ealdorman of Berkshire 93–4
 Æthelwulf, King of Wessex 122
 Addingham (Yorks) 262
 Aidan, St, Bishop of Lindisfarne 119
 Alcuin, scholar 8
 Aldborough (Yorks) 95
 Alfred, King of Wessex 5, 43–59, 79–80, 112–13, 116, 118–19, 122, 125, 138, 232, 315, 320
 treaty with Guthrum 5, 43–59, 79, 81, 111
 Alhheard, Bishop of Dorchester 157
 Alkmund, St 119
 Amounderness 160
 Andelot (France), treaty of 53
 Anglo-Saxon settlements
 comparison with 17, 21–30, 33
 Anskar, Bishop of Hamburg-Bremen and missionary 108
 Anund, leader of a Viking army 112
 archaeological theory 9–10, 24–5, 27, 30
 art styles
 animal art 109, 242–4, 318–19
 Borre 242–8, 302–3
 Jelling 240–2, 302–3, 318
 Ringerike 318
 Trewiddle 264, 318, 320–1
 Urnes 318
 Winchester 241–2
 Ashby-de-la-Launde (Lincs) 249
 Ashford (Derbs) 230
 Asselt (Holland) 54
 Asser 47, 50, 53, 56, 142
 Athelney (Somerset) 53, 142
 Athelstan, King of Wessex 82, 116, 119, 125, 159–60, 166, 192, 312, 314, 320
 Augustine, St 138, 198
 Bakewell (Derbs) 225, 231, 233
 Ballidon (Derbs) 219
 Banbury (Oxfords) 159
 Bangor (Wales) 199
 baptism 8, 51, 112, 116, 136, 139, 143, 145–6, 163, 194–5, 232

- Bardney (Lincs) 119
 Bartholomew, St, of Farne 124
 Barton-upon-Humber (Lincs) 167
 Battersea (Surrey) 268
 Beacon Hill (Cumbria) 268, 270
 Bedale (Yorks) 268
 Bede, monk and author 24, 26, 56, 146, 163
 Bedford 81, 159, 162
 Beeby (Leics) 162
 Beesby (Lincs) 123
 Benfleet (Essex) 125
 Beohrtraed, Bishop of Lindsey 157
 Beverley (Yorks) 161, 166
 Bicker (Lincs) 191
 Birka (Sweden) 108, 240–2, 314, 318
 Birsay (Orkney) 296
 bishoprics, dioceses 141–3, 155–70, 225
 Blo-Norton (Norfolk) 244
 Bluntisham (Hunts) 82
 ‘Boethius’ 55
 Boga of Hemmingford, sons of, landholders 82
 Boniface, St, missionary 138
 Borre (Norway) 109, 244
 Bossall (Yorks) 316
 Braaid (Isle of Man) 296, 298, 300
 bracteates 109
 Bradbourne (Derbs) 219, 231
 Brailsford (Derbs) 228
 Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leics) 156, 213–14, 218–19, 225, 228
 Brigham (Cumbria) 268
 Brihtnoth, Ealdorman of Essex 163–4
 Brihtsige, son of *Ætheling* Beornoth 112
 Britford (Wiltshire) 71
 Brompton (Yorks) 205–6
 Brough of Birsay (Orkney) 300
 Bryant’s Gill (Cumbria) 298–9
 Buckden (Cambs) 301
 Buckquoy (Orkney) 296–7
 buildings 295–306
 Burgred, King of Mercia 53, 111
 burials 9–11, 30, 109–10, 120–1, 140–1, 156, 180, 195–7, 244, 249, 252, 259–72, 287–8, 316
 Burnham (Lincs) 167
 Burton Abbey (Staffs) 170, 218, 225
 Burwell (Cambs) 167
 Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk) 166
 Byrhtferth of Ramsey, chronicler 161, 164

 Caistor-by-Yarmouth (Norfolk) 264
 Cambridge 79, 81–2, 168
 Camphill (Yorks) 269
 Carlisle (Cumbria) 249, 268
 Castor (Northants) 214
 Catholme (Staffs) 301
 Catterick (Yorks) 166
 cemeteries (see burial)
 Ceolfrith, St, Abbot of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow 119
 Ceolred, Bishop of Leicester 157
 Ceolwulf II, King of Mercia 111–13
 Charles the Bald, Frankish king 50–1, 317
 Charles the Fat, Frankish king 54
 Cheadle (Cheshire) 228
 Cheddar (Somerset) 301–2
 Chester 119, 283, 301, 314
 Chester-le-Street (Co. Durham) 112
 Christianization 8, 136
 churches, the Church 8–9, 65, 77, 115–21, 135–49, 155–70, 179–207, 214, 240, 262, 265–6, 270, 305
 Cirencester (Glos) 46
 Cloughton Hall (Lancs) 262, 268
 Cnut, King of England 52, 68–9, 71–8, 84–5, 95, 125, 136, 196, 320
 Coenwald, priest of Horningsea 116
 coinage 6, 8, 47, 51, 57, 79–80, 108, 113–16, 122–3, 125, 141, 147–8, 158, 168, 264–5, 303, 312, 315–17
 Comgall, St 199
 ‘Consolation of Philosophy’ 50
 conversion 8–9, 110, 116, 135–49, 198–9, 266

- Cookham (Berks) 83
 Corbridge (Northumb), battle of 112
 Cottam (Yorks) 240–1, 302–6
 Coventry (Warws) 167
 Cowlam (Yorks) 305
 Cranwich (Norfolk) 306
 Creeton (Lincs) 183, 187
 Crowland (Lincs) 164
 Crowle (Lincs) 193
 Croydon (Surrey) 267
 Cunningsburgh (Shetland) 298
 Cuthbert, St 79, 116, 118–19
 community of 112, 114–15, 142, 156,
 192, 203, 319

 DNA 12, 280, 288, 290
 Danelaw
 definition of 45, 66, 76–7
 characteristics of 20
 Danevirke defence (Denmark) 110
 ‘De Falsis Diis’, homily 94
 Derby 68, 94, 98–9, 113, 119, 168, 216,
 218–19
 Dewsbury (Yorks) 166, 218
 Doarlish Cashen (Isle of Man) 297–8
 Domburg (Netherlands) 249
 Dorchester (Oxfords) 159–60, 164, 168–9,
 186
 Dore (Derbs) 226
 Dublin (Ireland) 240, 246, 318
 Dudo of St-Quentin, chronicler 52
Dummoc (East Anglia) 156
 Durham 301

 Eadnoth, Abbot of Ramsey 162
 Eadnoth, Bishop of Dorchester 160, 186
 Eadred, King of Wessex and England 114,
 119, 159, 166, 196, 312
 Eadric Streona, Ealdorman of Mercia 75
 Eaglesfield (Cumbria) 268–9
 Ealdred, Bishop of Worcester and Arch-
 bishop of York 68, 161
 Eanbald II, Archbishop of York 203

 Easby (Yorks) 166
 Ecgbert, King of Wessex 264
 Ecgbert, ruler in York 112
 Edgar, King of England 48, 54, 72–3,
 77–8, 163–4, 166, 168
 Edington, battle of 46, 116
 Edith (Mathilda), Queen of England 124
 Edmund, King of Wessex 113, 116, 119,
 312
 Edmund, St, King of East Anglia 79, 116,
 122, 147, 166
 Edmund Ironside, King of England 71, 75
 Edward the Elder, King of Wessex 44, 73,
 81–2, 112, 114, 135, 147, 159, 170, 192,
 231–3, 267
 Edwin, son of Earl Ælfgar 68
Egil’s Saga 311
 Eirtig, church patron 189
 Elmet (Yorks) 226
 Elmham (Suffolk) 156, 158
 Ely (Cambs) 163–4, 167
 Emma (Ælfgifu), Queen of England 124
 Erik Bloodaxe, ruler of York 99, 114, 119,
 314, 320
 Esbrid, landholder 112
 ethnicity
 definitions of 6, 8, 19–20, 26, 28–30,
 57–8, 66–7, 78, 83–4, 288
 Eynsham (Oxfords) 249

 Fincham (Norfolk) 306
 Five Boroughs 72, 74–5, 113, 226, 228,
 231
 Fletton (Hunts) 214
 Flixborough (Lincs) 165, 240–1
 Formosus, Pope 142, 158
 Freswick Links (Caithness) 300, 306

 Gainsborough (Lincs) 74
 Gall, St 199
 genetic evidence 12–13, 277–90
Gethynctho 167, 303
 Gildas, author 24

- Gilling West (Yorks) 166
 Glastonbury (Somerset) 119
 Godfred, Danish king 110
 Godiva, countess 160, 186
 Goldsborough (Yorks) 267, 316
 Goltho (Lincs) 301–2, 306
 Gorm, Danish king 110
 Gotland, picture-stones 117
 Guthred/Guthfrith, leader of a Viking army
 6, 112, 116, 122, 124, 138, 147, 192,
 232, 319
 treaty with Alfred 5, 43–59, 79, 81, 111
 Guthlac, St, of Crowland 164

 Haesten, leader of a Viking army 116, 125,
 138
 Halfdan, leader of a Viking army 112
 Halfdan, Scandinavian ruler in England
 113, 319
 Hamwic (Southampton, Hamps) 301
 Harald Bluetooth, Danish king 110
 Harold, earl 68, 71
 Harrold (Beds) 264–5
 Hatcliffe (Lincs) 244
 Hedeby (Germany) 241, 314–15, 318
 Helperby (Yorks) 161
 Henry I, King of England 124
 Hervey, Archbishop of Rheims 142, 145
 Hesketh-in-the-Forest (Cumbria) 262, 268,
 270
 Hexham (Northumb) 215
 Hild, St, of Whitby 119
Historia de Sancto Cuthberto 79, 111–12,
 118–19
 hoards 120, 267–8, 316
 Hope (Derbs) 226, 230–2
 Horningsea (Cambs) 116, 163, 166
 Hovingham (Yorks) 120
 Hoxne (Suffolk) 158, 165
 Hunberht, Bishop of Elmham 158
 Huntingdon 168
 Iceland 281
 Ine, King of Wessex, law-code of 55

 Ingleby (Derbs)
 Heath Wood cemetery 121, 237, 263,
 269–70, 272
 Ipswich (Suffolk) 168
 Ireland 192, 195, 196, 199, 249, 281–3,
 285, 290, 317, 320
 Isle of Man 180, 192–4, 230, 244, 249,
 263, 270, 283, 295–8, 302, 306
 Ivarr the Boneless, leader of a Viking army
 111

 Jarlshof (Shetland) 296, 298–9, 318
 Jelling (Denmark) 110
 John, St of Beverley 161
 John X, Pope 142, 145–6

 Kanhave Canal (Denmark) 110
 Kildale (Yorks) 268–9, 270–1
 Kilmainham (Ireland) 270–1
 Kiloran Bay (Colonsay) 249
 Kirkdale (Yorks) 95
 Kirklevington (Yorks) 118, 202–3
 ‘Knutr’, King of York 115

 law-codes 43–59, 66, 69, 72–85
 ‘Laws of Edward and Guthrum’ 44, 48, 77
 ‘Laws of Hlothere and Eadric’ 45
 Leeds (Yorks) 118, 166
 Leicester 113, 157, 159, 218
 Leighton (Hunts) 159
 Leofric, earl 160, 186
 Leofwine, Bishop of Lindsey and Dorchester
 157, 159
Liber Eliensis 82, 165–6, 170
 Lichfield (Staffs) 167, 216, 218–19
Life of St Oswald 161
 Lilla Howe (Yorks) 267
 Lincoln 68, 113, 123, 160, 167–8, 183,
 187–90, 197, 201–7, 221, 225–6, 230–1,
 268, 306
 Lindsey
 bishops of 156–7, 160, 196–7
 linguistic evidence 7–8, 18–22, 27, 31–2,

- 89–101, 123, 126, 285–6
 Little Paxton (Cambs) 264
 London 45–6, 52, 54, 189–90, 267
 lordship 5–6, 43–59, 65–85, 107–27, 147,
 162–3, 180, 186–7, 189–207, 226, 228–
 33, 270–1, 305–6, 319–21
 Louis the German, Frankish king 51
 Louis the Stammerer, Frankish king 51
 Louis II, Frankish king 51
 Louth (Lincs) 160
 Lund (Sweden) 318
 Lythe (Yorks) 201–3

 Manchester 225
 marriage 75
 Marton (Lincs) 183, 189–91, 201–3
 Masham (Yorks) 166
 Maurice, Bishop of London 52
 Mendham (Suffolk) 165
 Meols (Isle of Man) 306
 metalwork 11–12, 237–52, 264–5, 267–70,
 287, 302–3, 316–21
 jewellery 11–12, 125, 140, 237–52,
 264–5, 268–9, 302–3, 316–21
 swords/weapons 120, 264–5, 267–9, 287
 Michael, St 194
 Middleton (Yorks) 193
 migrations 17–39, 43, 281–90
 Morcar, son of Earl Ælfgar 68–9, 71–3, 75

 Newark (Notts) 160
 Newton-le-Wolds (Lincs) 123
 Nicholas II, Pope 160
 Norman Conquest
 comparison with 20–1, 52, 58, 124–5
 North Elmham (Norfolk) 301
 Northallerton (Yorks) 166, 205–6
 Northampton 68, 70, 81, 168
 Northman, thegn 75–6
 ‘Northumbrian Priests’ Laws’ 161, 169
 Norwich 167–8, 242
 Nottingham 113
 Nunburnholme (Yorks) 117, 194

 Oda, Bishop of Ramsey and Archbishop of
 Canterbury 140, 162
 Odin 118, 197
 Offa, King of Mercia 216
 Ohthere, Scandinavian visitor to Alfred’s
 court 56
 Olaf Guthfrithsson, King of York 113,
 140, 195
 Olaf Sihtricsson, King of York 116
 Olney, peace of 69
 Omgard (Denmark) 301
 Orc, landholder 94–5
 Orderic Vitalis, chronicler 164
 ‘Ordinance of the Dunsæte’ 44, 55–6
 Ormside (Cumbria) 264, 269
 ‘Orosius’ 50, 56
 Osberht, Northumbrian king 111, 156
 Oscytel, Bishop of Dorchester and Arch-
 bishop of York 157, 159–63
 Oscytel, leader of a Viking army 112
 Oslac, Ealdorman of York 161, 163
 Oswald, Archbishop of York 161–5, 170
 Oswald, St, Northumbrian king 119
 Oswine, Northumbrian king 69
 Oswy, Northumbrian king 79, 232
 Otley (Yorks) 166
 Ottar, visitor to the court of King Alfred
 315
 Oundle (Hunts) 163
 Oxford 65–6, 70, 73

 paganism 44, 135–6, 139–46, 194–9, 242,
 265–6, 270
 Pallig, Scandinavian mercenary 65–6
 ‘Pastoral Care’ 47–8
Pecsætna 219, 226, 228, 230–1
 personal names 21, 51, 57, 83, 93, 95, 98,
 121–5, 141
 Peterborough, *Medeshamstede* (Cambs)
 156, 163–4, 214
 place-names 7, 13, 18, 20–2, 31–2, 46, 55,
 93, 97–101, 122, 125–6, 140, 169, 179,
 229–30, 239–40, 283–4

- Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury 158
 Pool (Sanday) 296–8
- Ragnald, leader of a Viking army 116, 119, 192, 314
 Ragnarr Lothbroc, leader of a viking army 314
 Ramsey (Hunts) 164, 167, 170
 Raunds (Northants) 167, 169–70, 182
 Reading (Berks) 269
 Reginn, heroic figure 195
 relics and cults of saints 69, 115, 119–20, 140, 158, 161, 163–4, 166
 Repton (Derbs) 111, 156, 216, 218–19, 225, 237, 263, 268, 270, 272, 287
 Ribbleshead (Yorks) 237, 298–300
 Ribe (Denmark) 318
 Ricsige, ruler in York 112
 Rimbart, Bishop of Hamburg-Bremen 108
 Ripon (Yorks) 119, 161, 166, 169, 264
 Rollo, leader of Viking army in Frankia 52
 Royston Heath (Cambs) 264
 rune-stones 108, 110, 232
- St Brice's Day massacre 65–7
 St-Claire-sur-Epte (France), treaty of 52
 St Neots (Cambs) 301
 Saedding (Denmark) 301–2
 Saffron Walden (Essex) 264–5, 268–9
 Sandbach (Cheshire) 216, 225
 Sandwick (Shetland) 299
 Santon Downham (Norfolk) 268–9
 Scandinavia
 comparison with 108–11, 117, 120–1, 232, 237–53, 262–3, 266–9, 281–4, 288–9, 295–306, 311–21
 Scotland 281–2, 285–6, 296–300, 316–7
 sculpture 6, 8, 11, 30, 108, 116–18, 120, 125, 140, 156, 179–206, 213–33, 238, 302, 306, 312, 317, 319
 Sedgeford (Norfolk) 264
 'Sermon of the Wolf' 77
- settlements 12, 30–1, 240–1, 246, 295–306, 311–21
 rural 12, 30–1, 240–1, 246, 295–306
 urban 12, 240–1, 246, 311–21
 Shrewsbury (Shrops) 119
 Siferth, thegn 71–3, 75
 Sigeferth, Bishop of Lindsey 72
 Sigurd, heroic figure 117, 195
 Sihtric, Earl of Cambridge 81
 Sihtric, King of York 116, 125
 coins minted for 115
 Simy Folds (Yorks) 298–300
 Sinnington (Yorks) 199
 Siward, Earl of Northumbria 71
 Skaill (Deerness) 296
 skeletal morphology 12, 287–8
 Skerne (Lincs) 120
 Sleaford (Lincs) 180
 Snaculf, church patron 203
 Sockburn (Co. Durham) 203
 'Soliloquies' 50
 Sonning (Berks) 268–9
 South Kyme (Lincs) 120
 Southwell (Notts) 160–1
 Stainmore (Westmorland) 99
 Stamford (Lincs) 113, 226
 Stanwick (Yorks) 206
 Stoke by Nayland (Suffolk) 165
 Stolton (Hunts) 159
 Stow (Lincs) 160, 183, 186
 Sulgrave (Northants) 301
 Sutton (Notts) 161
 Swein, King of Denmark 74–6, 83–4, 320
 Symeon of Durham, chronicler 111, 195, 203
- Tamworth (Staffs) 216, 219
 Tettenhall (Staffs) 314
 Thanet (Kent) 70
 The Udal (Hebrides) 249, 297
 Theodred, Bishop of London 158–9, 165
 Theodulf, Bishop of Orléans 146

- Thetford (Norfolk) 301
 Thor's hammers 140, 146, 242, 268
 Thorney (Cambs) 163
 Thorth, son of Earl Oslac 163
 Thurcytel, Earl of Bedford 81, 113
 Thurcytel, Abbot of Bedford 162, 164
 Thurferth, Earl of Northampton 113
 Toli, Earl of Huntingdon 82, 113
 Tope, landholder 82
 Torksey (Lincs) 189–91, 202, 204, 207
 Tostig, Earl of Northumbria 68–71
 Tovi the Dane, landholder 300
 Trelleborg (Denmark) 301–2
 Tribal Hidage 217, 219–21

 Uhtred, Earl of Northumbria 74
 Uhtred, landholder 230–1
 Valsgarde (Sweden) 109
 Vendel (Sweden) 109
Vita Anskarii 108
Vita Sancti Oswaldi 164
 Vorbasse (Denmark) 301–2

 Wales 283–5
 Wallingford (Oxfords) 267
 Walsingham (Norfolk) 244
 Waltham Abbey (Essex) 300, 302
 Watling Street 45, 70–1, 74–5, 85
 Wedmore, treaty made at 46
 Weland, heroic figure 118, 194
 Werburgh, St 119

 Wharram Percy (Yorks) 167, 302
 Whitbarrow Scar (Cumbria) 269
 Whitby (Yorks) 119, 156, 202
 Whithorn (Scotland) 249
 Whitwell (Derbs) 226
 Wicken Fen (Cambs) 264
 Wilfrid, St, of Ripon 164
 William I, King of England 52, 58, 312
 William of Malmesbury, chronicler 65, 119, 311
 Wensley (Yorks) 264, 269
 Winchester (Hamps) 163
 Winwick (Cheshire) 263–4
 Wirksworth (Derbs) 120, 231
 Wulfhere, Archbishop of York 112, 312
 Wulfhere, ealdorman in Wessex 53
 Wulfstan, visitor to the court of King Alfred 315
 Wulfstan I, Archbishop of York 119, 140, 160, 195
 Wulfstan II, Archbishop of York 44–5, 50, 69, 73, 76–8, 85, 92, 303
 Wulfstan of Dalham, thegn 163
 Wulfwig, Bishop of Dorchester 160

 Yarm (Yorks) 202, 204
 York 12, 30, 70–1, 75, 79–80, 92, 95, 111–16, 142, 156–7, 160–1, 163, 167–70, 192–7, 203–7, 221, 225–6, 230–1, 237, 244, 271, 302, 306, 311–21

